A TREATISE OF Family Instruction:

Wherein it is proved to be the Duty of Parents and Masters of Families to Train up their Children and Servants in the Knowledge of the SCRIPTURES.

With Directions how this Work may be done so as to promote the Conversion, Edification, and Eternal Salvation of all such as are under their Charge.

Useful for Parents and Masters of Families.

By *Owen Stockton*, Minister of the Gospel.

Deut. 6. 6, 7.

These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children—

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To Parents and Maſters of Families, more eſpecially to ſuch as are Inhabitants of *Colcheſter* in *Eſſex*.

Men, Brethren, and Fathers,

IT *is* God *that* ſetteth the ſolitary in Families [a]. *And when he buildeth us houſes, and committeth to our charge the Education of Children or Servants, he repoſeth a great truſt in us. For our Children are more his Children than ours.* [b] Behold all ſouls are mine; As the ſoul of the Father, ſo alſo the ſoul of the Son is mine. *And our Servants are more his Servants than ours. As the ſoul of the Maſter, ſo alſo the ſoul of the Servant is his. Both children and ſervants are committed to us, not ſo much for our own uſe and ſervice, as that we ſhould train them up to know, ſerve and glorifie God. What* Pharaoh's *daughter ſaid to* Moſes *his Mother.* [c] Take this child and nurſe it for me, and I will give thee thy wages *The like God ſaith to us, Take theſe children, Take theſe ſervants, and educate them for me, and I will give you your reward, Your labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord. The charge which the Lord giveth us concerning every one that he commits to our truſt is ſtrict and weighty, much like that which is mentioned,* 1 *Kings* 20. 39. Behold a man turned aſide, and brought a man to me, and ſaid, Keep this man, if by any means he be miſſing, then ſhall thy life be

[a] Pſal. 68. 6.

[b] Ezek. 18 4.

[c] Exod. 2. 9.

for his life. *At the Day of Judgment every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God* [d]. *And not of our ſelves only, but of all the ſouls alſo that are under our charge, as we may learn from the words of the Apoſtle,* [e] Obey them that have the rule over you, and ſubmit your ſelves, for they watch for your ſouls as they that muſt give an account. *At that day, when we, the children, and the ſervants, whom God hath given us, ſhall appear before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, if any of them be miſſing, and it be found that they periſhed, either through our negligence, or our evil example, or any other way through our means, our lives ſhall go for theirs. When* Laban *committed the keeping of his flock unto* Jacob, *he required at* Jacob's *hands, every beaſt that was loſt, although he was his near kinſman.* [f] That which was torn of beaſts I brought it not unto thee. I bare the loſs of it, of my hands didſt thou require it, whether ſtoln by day or by night. *If* Laban *required at* Jacob's *hands every beaſt that he loſt, God may much more require at our hands every ſoul which he entruſts us withal, and if any be loſt through our careleſsneſs, cauſe us to bear the loſs of it; for one ſoul is of more value than all the beaſts in the whole world. Wherefore the Apoſtle* Paul *called unto* Timothy, [g] O Timothy, keep that which is committed unto thy truſt. *So may I call unto you, my beloved Brethren, O keep thoſe children, keep thoſe ſervants whom the great God hath committed to your truſt. Keep them from ſinning againſt the Lord. Keep them from walking*

d Rom. 14. 12.
e Heb. 13. 17.
f Gen. 31. 39.
g 1 Tim. 6. 20.

ing in the broad way that leads to deſtruction. Keep them from periſhing by ignorance, error, or a ſinful converſation, leaſt their bloud be required at your hands, for not ſhewing them the path of life, and [h] *warning them to turn from their evil ways. Keep them as our Lord Jeſus kept thoſe whom his Father committed to him, of whom he ſaith,* [i] While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy Name, thoſe that thou gaveſt me, I have kept, and none of them is loſt but the ſon of perdition. *And how did Jeſus Chriſt keep thoſe whom his Father had given him? By praying for them.* [k] I pray for them — Holy Father, keep through thine own Name, thoſe whom thou haſt given me, that they may be one as we are. *And by inſtructing them,* I have manifeſted thy Name unto the men which thou gaveſt me out of the world — *And whence did he draw the Inſtructions which he gave them? Out of the Scriptures.* [l] Begining at Moſes and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himſelf. *He gave them his Word, whereby they were brought to know and believe in him.* [m] I have given them the words which thou gaveſt me, and they have received them, and have known ſurely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didſt ſend me. *He did not only teach them to know but alſo to obey the Word.* [n] They have kept thy Word. *And they keeping his Word, were kept by his power through faith unto ſalvation.*

[h] Ezek. 3. 17, 18.

[i] John 17. 12.

[k] Ver. 9, 11.

[l] Luk. 24. 27.

[m] John 17. 8.

[n] Verſ. 6.

As ſoon as Manoah *had but the promiſe of a*

child, he went to God and deſired to be taught how he ſhould order and educate his child.

o Judg. 13. 8. ° Then Manoah intreated the Lord, and ſaid, O my Lord, let the Man of God which thou didſt ſend come again unto us, and teach us what we ſhall do unto the child that ſhall be born. *Would you that have not only a promiſe, but the actual enjoyment of children and ſervants, know what God would have you do unto them? You need no Angel or Man of God to come from Heaven to tell you; Do but ſearch the Scriptures, and there you ſhall find that the Lord requireth you to inſtruct and train up your children and ſervants, in the knowledge, belief, and obedience of his holy Word. Hear what God himſelf ſaith to you*

p Deut. 6. 6, 7. *concerning this matter.* ᵖ Theſe words which I command thee this day ſhall be in thine heart, and thou ſhalt teach them diligently

q Eph. 6. 4. unto thy children — ᵠ Ye Fathers provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. *And as God commands you to teach your children, ſo he hath put great advantages into Parents hands for doing this work, in regard of their daily preſence with their children, their authority over them, the intereſt they have in their affections, and their dependance on their Parents for their preſent and future ſubſiſtence.*

How much it conduceth to the glory of God to train up our children and ſervants in the knowledge and obedience of the holy Scriptures, what bleſſings it will bring upon our ſelves and Families, what exceeding great benefits

will

will accrue thereby to our children, what good we may do to the generations that are yet to come, how much it tends to the propagating of Religion and the power of godlineſs, and how Family Inſtruction may be carried on ſucceſsfully to the Converſion, Edification, and eternal Salvation of ſuch as are under charge, you may ſee in the peruſal of this enſuing Treatiſe, which I have compoſed for the uſe of ſuch Heads of Families as are not provided of better helps, but more eſpecially for you my dearly beloved Friends, among whom I have lived, and with whom I have converſed: My humble and earneſt requeſt to you is, that if you have any love to the Lord Jeſus, you would expreſs it by feeding his Lambs with the ſincere milk of his Word; if you have any zeal for the glory of God, if any bowels towards your poſterity, if any deſire of their ſpiritual and eternal welfare, if any regard to the generations that are yet unborn, if you have ever found any comfort in or benefit by the Word of God, that you would bend your minds, and ſet your hearts to this good work of inſtructing your children and ſervants in the knowledge, and training them up in the obedience of the Scriptures. And that you (and all others, into whoſe hands the Providence of God ſhall bring this ſmall Treatiſe) may by the peruſal thereof, be quickned to, directed and encouraged in this work of Family Inſtruction, and be enabled to manage the ſame to the glory of God, your own and your Families Edification, ſhall be the prayer of

Your Servant in the work of
the Lord,
Owen Stockton.

ERRATA.

Page 17. line 15. for 1 *Cor.*5.7. read 1 *Cor.*1. 5,7. p. 23. l. 27. for 1 *Pet.*2.22. r. 1 *Pet.*1.22. p. 75. l. 15. r. *Cocceius.* p. 105. l. 20. for *Prov.* 15. 20. r. *Prov.*13. 20. p. 144. l. 2. r. *fortifie.*

Some other ſmall faults have eſcaped the Preſs, which the judicious Reader will eaſily correct.

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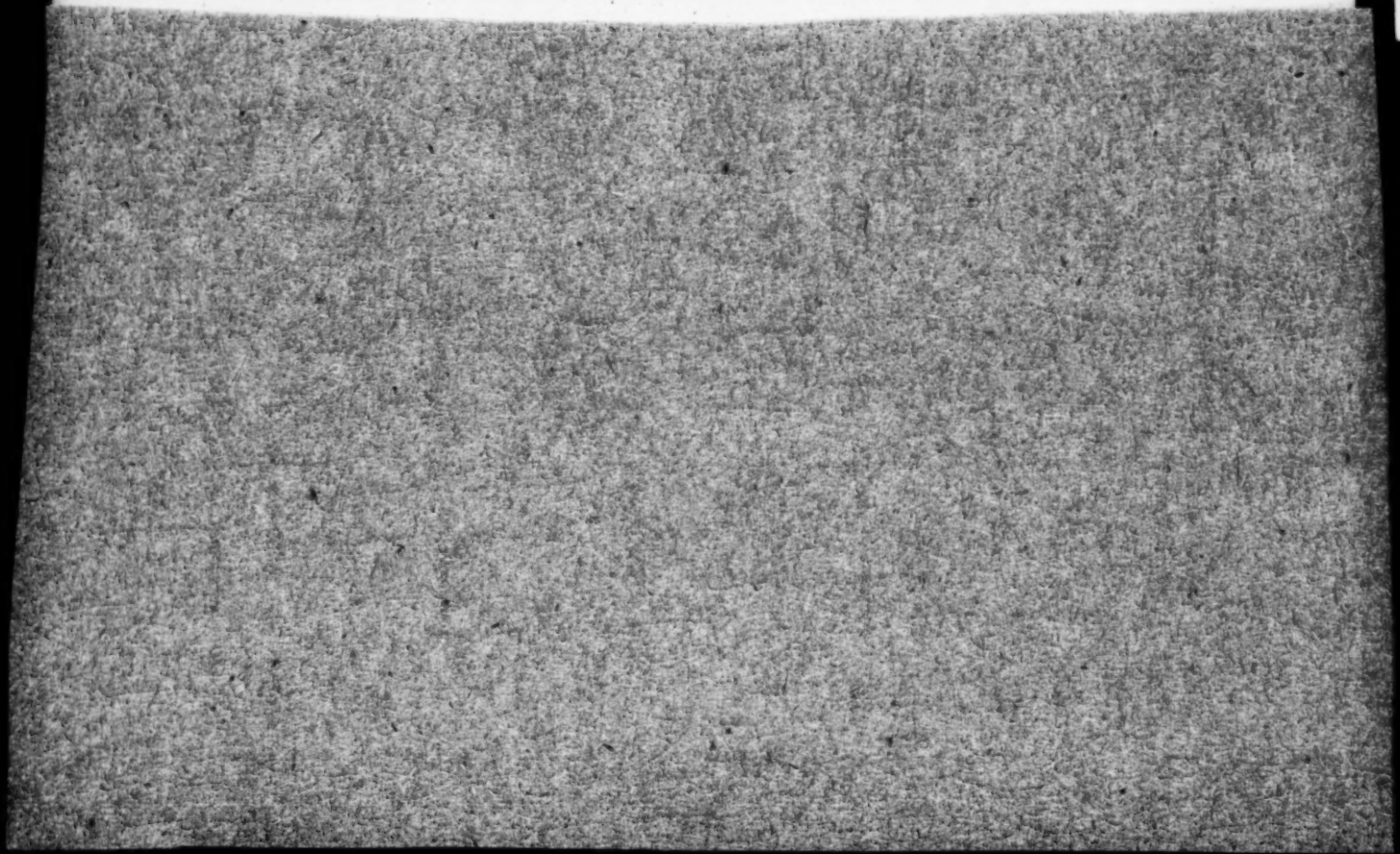

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A TREATISE OF Family-Instruction.

CHAP. I.

The Evils that arise from the neglect of Family-Instruction: Whence it proceeds that Family-Instruction is neglected. Five Arguments to prove it to be a Duty. The Instructions we give our Families must be drawn out of the Scriptures. Servants as well as Children must be instructed. Mothers as well as Fathers must instruct their Children.

THe neglect of Family-Instruction is a great and yet a common Evil: The sad effects thereof, such as the decay of the power of Godliness, gross ignorance, undutiful and disobedient Children, evil and unfaithful Servants, the growth and increase of sin, &c. are so plain and visible

sible almost in all places, that he that runneth may read them. Neither is it the present Generation only, which is corrupted through the carelesness of those Parents and Masters of Families who neglect to train up their Children and Servants in the knowledge and fear of God; but hereby ignorance and iniquity are like to be propagated unto, and greatly increased in, the Generations which are yet to come. For when God shall give those Children and Servants who were trained up without Instruction, Families of their own, it is most probale that they will neglect to teach their Children and Servants, and that the succeeding Generations which shall spring out of their Loyns, will tread in their Fathers steps, and so vice and ignorance will descend from one Family to an other for many generations. If we enquire into the ground and cause of this evil, whence it cometh to pass that Family-Instruction is so much neglected, I conceive the reason of most, if not of all mens neglect of this Duty, may be reduced to one of these four heads:

1. Either they are not convinced that it is their Duty to instruct their Families.

Or 2. Though they know it to be their Duty, they want an heart to set about the performance of it.

Or 3. Though they are willing to instruct their families, yet they know not how to set about this work, at least they know not how to carry it on in an advantageous successful manner, and therefore leave it undone.

Or 4. They have gotten certain pleas, whereby they think to excuse their neglect of this work. Wherefore in this ensuing Treatise, the design whereof is to excite parents and masters of families to

to train up their children in the knowledge and obedience of the Scriptures, I shall do these four things.

1. I shall prove it is the duty of parents and masters of families to instruct their children and servants in the knowledge, and to train them up in the obedience of the word of God.

2. I shall produce some motives to excite those who neglect this work of Family-instruction, to be diligent, constant, and conscientious, in the performance of their duty in teaching and instructing their families.

3. I shall give some directions how this work of family-instruction may be carried on so as to promote the conversion, edification, and eternal salvation of such as are under our charge.

4. I shall answer the most material Pleas and Objections that are brought against training up our Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures, whereby many persons are either kept from, or discouraged in the performance of this work.

I shall begin with the first of these, namely to prove, that it is the duty of all Parents and Masters of Families to teach the Scriptures unto their Children and Servants, and to train up their Families in the knowledge and obedience of the Word of God.

Sect. I.

Scripture-proofs for Family-Instruction. The Instructions we give our Families must be drawn out of the word of God.

Arg. 1. WE have many plain and expres Commandments from God, wherein the Lord straightly chargeth all Parents and Masters of

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1. What it is which we are to teach our children, and that is the word of God; *Theſe words which I command thee this day—thou ſhalt teach them unto thy Children.* The Apoſtle gives this commendation of the Scripture, that it is *profitable for inſtruction in Righteouſneſs*, 2 Tim.3.16. and intimates to us, *Rom.*2.17,18. That the Jews drew their inſtructions which they gave to thoſe whom they taught, out of the Law of God: *Behold thou art called a Jew, and knoweſt his will, and approveſt the things that are more excellent, being inſtructed out of the Law of God.*

2. Obſerve who they are whom God commands to teach his word unto their Children, and you ſhall find that this Charge is not given to the Tribe of *Levi*, but to all *Iſrael*: The Lord calls out twice to the whole Body of the People, *Hear O Iſrael*, verſ.3. *Hear O Iſrael*, verſ.4. If it had been ſaid, *Hear O Houſe of Aaron*, or *Hear O ye Sons of Levi*, we might have thought it had ſpecial reference to the Miniſters of the Word; but when this charge is uſhered

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in with a double Call to all *Iſrael* to give audience, no man can ſay, This Command of teaching Gods word to my Children, belongeth not unto me, except he be one that is and reſolveth to continue an alien to the Commonwealth of *Iſrael:* I may adde further, that this charge, *Thou ſhalt teach them diligently unto thy Children*, is given to the ſame perſons that are commanded to love God with all their hearts, verſ. 5. and to the ſame perſons that are enjoyned to treaſure up Gods word in their hearts, verſ. 6. So that every one that is obliged to love God, and to lay up Gods word in his heart, is obliged alſo, if he be one unto whom God hath given Children, to teach Gods word unto his Children.

3. Take notice what is meant by teaching Gods word unto our Children: It implies, 1. That we ſhould train them up in the knowledge of the Scriptures: To teach, is to convey knowledge and underſtanding, *Pſal.* 119.66. *Teach me good judgement and knowledge*; and to this effect the *Perſian* Tranſlation renders theſe words, *Expones ea filiis tuis*, Thou ſhalt expound them unto thy Children, thou ſhalt cauſe them to underſtand the ſenſe and meaning of my word. 2. To teach our Children the Scriptures, is to train them up in the obedience and practice of thoſe things which the Lord requireth of us in his holy word: There is a teaching to do, as well as to know the will of God, *Pſal.* 143.10. *Teach me to do thy will.* Matt. 28.20. *Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you.* 2 Chron. 6.27. *Thou haſt taught them the good way wherein they ſhould walk.*

4. Obſerve in what manner, and when we are to teach Gods word unto our Children; this work muſt not be done in a ſlight ſuperficial manner, but with

all diligence; *Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children.* And as for the times and seasons when we are to teach them, *Moses* intimates, that it must not be seldom, but this work must be done frequently, we should embrace all convenient seasons to be dropping some portion of Gods word into them,—*Thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

5. We have the persons described whom we are to instruct out of the word of God, and they are our Children, *Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children:* Now under the name of Children are comprehended our Servants, and all others in the Family that need instruction, as shall be shewed more fully afterwards.

Another Scripture wherein God commands us to teach his word unto our Children, we have in the *Psalms* of *David*, *Psal.* 78. 5,6,7. *He established a Testimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known unto their Children, that the Generation to come might know them, even the Children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their Children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his Commandments.* Here we may observe,

1. What it is which Parents are to teach and make known unto their Children, *The Law and the Testimony*; that is, the holy Scriptures, which are often called by this name, the Law and the Testimony, as we may see *Psal.* 19. 7. *Isa.* 8. 16,20.

2. We have a strict Command and a solemn Injunction from God, given unto Parents, to make known the Law and the Testimony unto their Children;

dren; *He commanded our Fathers that they should make them known unto their Children.*

3. We may take notice, that this practice of Parents teaching Gods Laws unto their Children, should be continued from one Generation to another, unto the end of the world, *That the Generation to come might know them, even the Children which should be born, who should arise and declare unto their Children.*

4. Here are three things hinted that Parents should aim at in making known Gods word unto their Children: 1. The bringing their Children to believe and hope in God; *That they might set their hope in God.* 2. The fixing and imprinting in their memories the word and the works of God, *And not forget the works of God.* 3. The training of them up in the practise and obedience of Gods Commandments, *But keep his Commandments.* The Psalmist shews in the eighth verse what the want or neglect of Parents making known Gods Laws to their Children produceth, Children prove stubborn and rebellious, or if they make a profession of Religion, they soon discover their hearts are not right with God; *And might not be as their Fathers, a stubborn and rebellious Generation, a Generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.*

Besides these Scriptures already mentioned, I might produce several others where God commands Parents to make known his word unto their Children, as *Isa.* 38. 19. *The Father to the Children shall make known thy Truth*: By Gods truth, which Fathers are here enjoyned to make known unto their Children, we may understand his word, for his word is called his Truth, *John* 17. 17. *Sanctifie them through thy Truth, thy Word is Truth.* See also *Deut.* 4. 8, 9, 10.

9, 10. *What Nation is there so great, that hath Statutes and Judgements so righteous as all this Law which I set before you this day? Only take heed to thy self, and keep thy Soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thine heart all the dayes of thy life; but teach them thy sons, and thy sons sons, specially the day when thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb, when the Lord said unto me, Gather the People together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the Earth, and that they may teach their Children.* Here we may observe,

1. That Gods word was given to the Jews for this very end that they might be brought to fear the Lord, and that they might teach his word unto their Children, *I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me——and that they may teach their Children.*

2. The Lord chargeth them very strictly to teach their Children his works which they had seen; but more specially his word which he delivered to them in *Horeb*: —*Only take heed to thy self, and keep thy soul diligently——teach them thy sons, and thy sons sons.*

To these places which I have cited out of the old Testament, I will adde one out of the New, wherein God chargeth Parents to train up their Children in the knowledge and obedience of his holy word, *Ephes.* 6. 4. *And ye Fathers provoke not your Children, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*: The Apostle doth not say, *And ye Ministers*, as limiting this work to them; but, *And ye Fathers*— implying, that it is the will of God, that all Parents should bring up their Children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But some may say, What is meant by the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

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The Greek words are, ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νουθεσίᾳ Κυρίου· παιδεία is rendred Instruction, 2 *Tim.* 3.16. and the instruction the Apostle speaks of there, is *instruction in righteousness*, such instructions as are drawn out of the Scriptures to instruct and direct us how to lead a righteous and holy life. It is sometimes also used for correction, *Heb.* 12.5. *My son despise not the chastening of the Lord*; νουθεσία signifies such a teaching as fixeth in the mind, and fasteneth upon the heart those instructions which are useful to inform the judgment and reform the life. To this effect *Zanchy* interprets this word νουθεσία, *Significat admonitionem non simpliciter, sed talem, quâ in mentem pueri ponas & ingeras, quæ sunt illi ad salutem necessaria.* And *Camerarius*, *Significat efficacem admonitionem quâ aliquis ad meliorem mentem revocatur.* The Apostle adds Κυρίου, to shew that those instructions and admonitions which we give our Children, must not be what our own hearts, or our own wisdom prompts us to, but they must be drawn out of the word of the Lord. The *Ethiopick* Translation renders the words thus, *Enutrite & erudite in Doctrina Dei*; bring them up and instruct them in the Doctrine of God. The Doctrine of God is an Epithet given the Gospel, *Tit.* 2. 10. When therefore the Apostle exhorts Parents to bring up their Children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, the sense and meaning of those words is to this effect, That they should labour by instruction, correction, and dayly admonitions, to train up their Children in the knowledge, faith, and obedience of the Word of God; and thus the generality of Expositors interpret this place: As *Beza*, *Monitis ex verbo Dei petitis*; Draw the Counsel and Admonitions which you give your Children, out of the word of God. And *Vatablus*, *Date eis viuendi modum*,

modum, secundum doctrinam & monita Christi; Give them Rules and Directions how to order their Lives according to the Doctrine and Commandments of Christ. *Zanch. Ut pueri instituantur ea pietate, quæ, id est, in verâ Dei cognitione, verâ Pietate, veraq; religione doctrinam cælestem in liberorum animos semper instillando*; To bring up our Children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, is to bring them up in the true knowledge of God, true Piety, and the true Religion, by a continual instilling heavenly Doctrine (that is, the word of God) into our Childrens minds. And *Piscator, Erudiant & instituant in Doctrina Christiana*; Let them bring them up and instruct them in the Doctrine of Christ. *Corn. Lapid. Vos, O Patres, educate illos in Doctrina Christi, date eis Christiana monita, quibus bene & Christiane vivendi modum addiscant*; Do you, O Fathers, educate your Children in the Doctrine of Christ, give them Christian counsel, that they may learn to live well, and as becometh Christians. Our English Annotations explain those words, *In the admonition of the Lord*, thus; Such Admonitions, Instructions, and Precepts, as are taken out of the word of God, and are acceptable to him. I might mention *Theodoret*, *Chrysostom*, (who discourseth very largely on this place about the education of Children in the knowledge of the Scriptures) and divers others, who give the same sence of this Text; but I suppose it needless to adde any more. What is implied in those words, *Bring up your Children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, may be gathered by comparing this place with 1 *Tim.* 4.6. where the same Apostle speaking of *Timothy*, saith, He *was nourished up in the words of Faith and good Doctrine*; And what those words of Faith and good Doctrine were, in which *Timothy* was nourished up, we may

learn

learn from 1*Tim.*6.3. *Even the words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs.* So that to bring up our Children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, is to nouriſh them up from their Childhood in the knowledge of the word of the Lord, and eſpecially to inſtill ſuch portions of the Goſpel into their minds, as may breed in their hearts faith in Jeſus Chriſt, and may bring them to lead godly and holy Lives.

Sect. 2.

Servants as well as Children are to be inſtructed.

IT may be ſome will ſay, Theſe Scriptures which you have produced, ſpeak fully of teaching Gods word unto our Children; but here is nothing ſpoken of inſtructing our Servants: How doth it appear that we are to teach Gods word unto our Servants, as well as unto our Children?

I anſwer:

1. In *Deut.*6,7,8. Where the Lord commands us to lay up his words in our hearts, and to teach them diligently unto our Children, there is added, *Thou ſhalt talk of them when thou ſitteſt in thine houſe*; and verſ.9. *Thou ſhalt write them upon the poſts of thine houſe, and on thy gates*: which Precepts imply thus much, That it is our duty not only to teach our Children, but that we are alſo bound to inſtruct all that go out, and all that come in at our doors, even our whole houſhold, in the knowledge of the word of God.

2. In thoſe fore-quoted Scriptures, wherein the Lord commandeth us to teach his word unto our Children, we are commanded to teach our Servants alſo; for our Servants are comprehended in this word

word *Children.* This will be made evident by considering how the word Children is used in other places, and the use of the Hebrew word בנים and the Greek words παῖδες and τέκνα. It is usual with the Scripture to call those persons whom we either do, or by our duty are obliged to instruct, our Children, 1 *John* 2.1. *My little Children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not*——2 Cor. 6.13. *I speak as unto my Children*——*Psal.* 34.11. *Come ye Children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* The People of a Nation that are united under one form of Government, are called the Children of that Nation. Thus we read of the Children of *Israel*, and the Children of *Judah*, 2 Chron. 13.18. *The Children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the Children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their Fathers.* The Children of *Israel* signifie the ten Tribes that were under *Jeroboam*'s Government; and the Children of *Judah*, the two Tribes that were under the Government of the house of *David.* Now if all the People that belong to one Nation, are called the Children of that Nation, why may not all the members of a Family be called the Children of that Family? בנים which is the Hebrew word that is used for Children, *Deut.* 6.7. is translated by the *Septuagint Zeph.* 1.8. *Amos* 3.1. and in many other places, by οἶκος, which signifieth an House, or a Family: And younger persons are called בנים as *Prov.* 7.7. *I discerned among the youths*—where the Hebrew word translated *youths*, is the same with that which is rendred *Children*, Deut. 6.7. It is also of that comprehensive signification, that it includes all Inferiours, and such as are in subjection to others, as well as Children, 2 *King.* 16.7. *So Ahaz sent Messengers to Tiglath-Pileser, saying, I am thy*

Servant, and thy Son. And the Greek word παῖς ſignifies Servants as well as Children. It is rendred a Servant, *Mat.*8.13. & *Mat.*14.2. It is tranſlated a Child, *John*4.51. *Mat.*2.16. So alſo τέκνα which is another word uſed for Children, ſignifieth not only Children in a ſtrict ſenſe, that is, ſuch as come out of our Loyns, but ſuch Perſons as inhabit one and the ſame place, are called τέκνα, *Luk.*13.34. *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, how often would I have gathered thy Children together?*——And ſuch as are under the care and inſtruction of one and the ſame perſon, are called by the name of τέκνα, that mans Children. Thus the Apoſtle writing to the *Corinthians*, whom he had inſtructed and begotten to Chriſt, calls them τέκνα μου, *my Sons*, 1 Cor.4.14. *As my beloved Sons, I warn you.* I may adde this farther, That the Maſter of a Family is called *Pater Familias*, *The Father of the Family*: *Naamans* Servants call their Maſter, Father; 2 *Kings* 5.13. *His Servants came near unto him, and ſaid, My Father*——And it is uſual in Scripture for Superiours to call their Servants and Inferiours by the name of Sons or Children. I will produce, of many inſtances which might be named, only theſe two, the one of *Joſhua*, who *calls Achan ſon*, *Joſh.*7.19. *Joſhua ſaid unto Achan, My ſon, give I pray thee glory to the God of Iſrael, and make confeſſion to him.* The other of Chriſt, who *tells* his Diſciples that he was their Lord and Maſter, *John* 13.13. yet he *calls* them by the name of *Children*, *John* 21.5. *Jeſus ſaith unto them, Children have ye any meat?*

3. The practice and example of the Servants of God in former Ages, proveth it to be our duty to inſtruct our Servants as well as our *Children*: If we obſerve what they did, we ſhall find they were careful to train up their houſhold in the knowledge and fear of

God

God. Thus did *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 19. *I know him that he will command his Children and his Houshold after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.* So also did *Joshua*, Josh. 24. 15. *As for me and my House, we will serve the Lord.* *Cornelius* being a devout man himself, trained up all his house in the fear of God, *Act.* 10. 2. *A devout man, and one that feared God, with all his House.*

4. In all Religious Exercises we find Governours of Families enjoyned to regard with an equal care their Children and their Servants, whether they be Men or Maid Servants. As for instance, in the sanctification of the Sabbath, they are commanded to look after their Servants, and them that sojourn with them, as well as their Children, *Exod.* 20. 8. *Remember the sabbath to keep it holy*——*In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy stranger that is within thy Gates.*——So also in the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, the whole Family was to keep the Feast unto the Lord, *Deut.* 16. 14. *Thou shalt rejoyce in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man servant and thy maid servant.*

5. Instruction is as necessary for, and will be as beneficial to our Servants as our Children, (as shall be shewed afterwards) and therefore we should not think much to bestow our pains in teaching them such things as are necessary to salvation: Seeing 1. They have immortal Souls, which are as precious to *God* as our own Souls, or the Souls of our Children, *Ezek.* 18. 4. *Behold all Souls are mine.*—— 2. Jesus Christ hath done as great things for our Servants as he hath done for us or our Children; He died for them as well as for us; He makes the Bond as well as the Free Members of his Body, and Partakers of

his

his Spirit, 1 Cor. 12. 13. *By one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been made to drink into one Spirit:* He makes no distinction of Bond or Free, in the communication of his benefits; but the bond man and the free man are all one in Christ, *Gal.* 3. 28. *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* 3. God the Father will do as great things for our servants, as he will for us or our Children; if they seek and serve him, he will give them his Spirit, *Joel* 2. 29. *And also upon the Servants and upon the Handmaids in those days I will pour out my Spirit:* He will give them an inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven, *Col.* 3. 22, 24. *Servants obey in all things your Masters according to the flesh—knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance.* John 12. 26. *If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant be* —— He will give them all good things, *Psal.* 34. 10. *They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.* Shall we think much to spend a little time, and to take a little pains in teaching our Servants, when God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, doth such great things for them?

It is evident from these Scriptures which I have produced, that it is our duty to teach Gods word unto our Children; and not only to our Children, but also to our Servants: yea, that there are many clear, express, and strict Commandments given to us by the great God for our performance of this Duty. Now how shall we be able to appear before God at the day of Judgment, if we live in the neglect of a known Duty, which is so often and so earnestly pressed upon us by God himself!

Sect.

Sect. 3.

The ignorance of Children and Servants proves the neceſſity of Family-Inſtruction. The Evils of Ignorance.

Arg. 2. THe great ignorance that is in our Children and Servants, ſheweth Family-Inſtruction to be a neceſſary duty. Children before they are inſtructed have no knowledge of the things of God, Deut. 31. 13. *And that their Children which have not known any thing:* And not Children only, but the greater part of ſuch as are grown to mans eſtate have little or no knowledge of God, Pſal. 14. 2. *The Lord looked down from Heaven upon the Children of men, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand and ſeek God.* And what account doth he give of the Children of men? Rom. 3. 11. *There is none that underſtandeth, there is none that ſeeketh after God.* There is none comparatively, there are ſo few underſtanding men, that they ſeem to be none, compared with the multitude of ignorant perſons; or if it relate to men in an unregenerate condition, they are all deſtitute of the true and ſaving knowledge of God and Jeſus Chriſt. Even in thoſe places, in thoſe families, and in thoſe Churches where perſons injoy great means of knowledge, if inquiry be made what underſtanding in the things of God ſuch perſons have attained unto, there will be found much ignorance in many that have a long time injoyed great advantages to get knowledge. The people of *Iſrael* had greater means of knowledge than any Nation under Heaven, Pſal. 147. 19, 20. *He ſheweth his word unto* Jacob, *his ſtatutes and his judgments unto* Iſrael, *he*

he hath not dealt ſo with any nation; yet hear how God complains of *Iſraels* ignorance. *Jer*, 4.22. *My people is fooliſh, they have not known me, they are fooliſh children, and they have none underſtanding, they are wiſe to do evill, but to do good they have no knowledge.* The Hebrews who had excellent teaching a long time, in ſo much that in reſpect of the time and means they might have been Teachers of others, were ſo raw and weak in knowledge, that it was needful for them to be inſtructed in the firſt principles of the Oracles of *God*, *Heb.* 5.12. *When for the time ye ought to be Teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the firſt principles of the Oracles of God.* The *Church* of *Corinth* had many eminent Paſtors and Teachers, as *Paul*, *Apollo*, &c. and did excel in gifts, 1 *Cor.*5.7. *In every thing ye are inriched by him in all utterance, and in all knowledge, —ſo that ye come behind in no gift:* Yet in this eminent Church there were ſome found that had no knowledge of God, 1 *Cor.*15.34. *Some have not the knowledge of God, I ſpeak this to your ſhame.*

Now in regard there is naturally much *blindneſs* and *ignorance* in the minds and underſtandings of our children and Servants; it is neceſſary we ſhould labour and take great pains with them, to bring them to the knowledge of God, by inſtructing them out of Gods word; if we have any regard either to the glory of God, or to our own good, or the good of our Children and Families. For,

1. The permitting of our Families to remain without the knowledge of God, will bring down Gods Judgments upon them: for God is wont to pour out his fury upon thoſe perſons and Families that have no knowledge of God, *Jer.*10.25. *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not upon thy Name.* Igno-

rance of God was one ground of the Lords controverſie with the Land of *Iſrael*, *Hoſ.*4.1. *The Lord hath a Controverſie with the Inhabitants of the Land, becauſe there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land.* If where the knowledge of God is wanting in a Nation, God hath a controverſie with that Nation, may we not alſo conclude that God hath a controverſie, and will plead his controverſie with thoſe Families where there is no knowledge of God?

2. Our Children will prove great Croſſes, and bring much grief and ſorrow upon us, if we train them up in ignorance, *Prov.*17.25. *A fooliſh ſon is a grief to his father, and bitterneſs to her that bare him,* *Prov.*19.13. *A fooliſh ſon is the calamity of his father.* And as they will be a great grief to their Parents, who are nurſed up in ignorance, ſo they will walk in ſuch courſes as will pierce themſelves through with many ſorrows, *Hoſ.*13.13. *The ſorrows of a travelling woman ſhall come upon him, he is an unwiſe ſon.*

3. If we do not inſtruct our Children and endeavour to inſtil knowledge into them, they will become uſeleſs perſons, and ſpend their days in vanity, and do no ſervice for God or their Generation. They will be unable to undertake and manage common and eaſie employments, *Eccleſ.*10.15. *The labour of the fooliſh wearieth every one of them, becauſe he knoweth not how to go to the City.* What is more eaſie to find out, than the way to a City, where there is much commerce and frequent going to and fro. Such perſons as are fooliſh and indiſcreet, though they labour and toil in common and eaſie things, as eaſie as to find the way to a City, they can bring nothing to any effect: And as fooliſh children will be unable to manage any employments of themſelves, ſo ſo they are unfit to be employed by others, *Prov.*26.

6.

6. He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool, cutteth off the feet, and drinketh damage.

4. If our Children and Servants be not taught to know the Lord, they cannot live godly lives, but will be alienated from the life of God, *Ephes.* 4. 18. *Having the understanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.* They will be so far from leading godly lives, if they be brought up in ignorance of God, that they will prove vitious persons; when the *Israelites* neglected the knowledge of God, they became a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, *Isa.* 1. 3, 4. *Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider: Ah sinful nation! A people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, Children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the holy One of Israel to anger, they are gone away backward.* The Apostle ranketh such as are *without understanding* among haters of God, and the chiefest of sinners, *Rom.* 1. 30, 31. If our Children and Servants be destitute of the knowledge of God, they will be easily drawn to the vilest and most abominable sins: such as Idolatry, *Gal.* 4. 8. *When ye knew not God, ye did service to them which by nature are no Gods:* Blasphemy, *Psal.* 74. 18. *The foolish people have blasphemed thy Name:* Persecution of the people of God, so far as to kill and destroy them, *Joh.* 16. 2, 3. *They shall put you out of the Synagogues, yea the time cometh that whosoever killeth you, will think he doth God service; and these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor me:* Adultery, *Prov.* 7. 7, 10, 21, 22, 25. *I beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding, and behold there met him a woman with the attire of an Harlot——With much fair speech she caused him to yield,*

with the flattering of her lips she forced him; he goeth after her straight-way, as an Ox goeth to the slaughter—— till a dart strike through his Liver, as a Bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life. Such as have no instruction, or being instructed do not obey the counsels that are given to them, are in the ready way to run into all kind of evil, *Prov.* 5.13,14. *I have not obeyed the voice of my Teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me; I was almost in all evil, in the midst of the Congregation and the Assembly.* If we tremble at the thoughts of having our Children prove Blasphemers, Idolaters, Adulterers, Persecutors of the people of God, and to run into all kind of evil, let us endeavour to prevent these great evils, by training them up in the knowledge and fear of the Lord.

5. If we bring up our Children in ignorance, they can have no fellowship with, or enjoyment of God, who is the chiefest Good: For, *God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all,* 1 Joh. 1.5. And persons that have no knowledge are said to be in darkness, *Ephes.* 5.8. *Ye were sometimes darkness:* And there can be no communion between Light and Darkness, 2 *Cor.* 6.14. *What Communion hath Light with Darkness?* Now what will all the good things which we give our Children whilst we live, or which we shall leave them when we die, avail them, if they have no enjoyment of God, who is the chiefest *Good?*

6. Without knowledge our Children and Servants cannot obtain salvation, but must perish eternally, *Psal.* 5.5. *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight.* Job 36.12. *They shall die without knowledge.* Prov. 2. 16. *The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the Congregation of the dead:* That is, he shall be cast into Hell, and abide there among

among the Devils and damned persons for ever. So it is expounded by *R. Sel. in catu gehennæ.* And *Menoch, Videtur sensus esse cum Dæmonibus futuros & cum impiis hominibus ad æterna supplicia damnatis:* That the Hebrew word which is here translated *dead*, signifieth *Hell*, may be gathered from *Prov.*9.18. *He knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of Hell.*

7. Without knowledge our Children will not only be undone in the world to come, but they are likely by their folly and indiscretion to undo themselves and their Families in this world, either by idleness, *Eccl.*4.5. *The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh*, Prov.24.30,31. Or by prodigality, *Prov.* 21.20. *There is a treasure to be desired, and Oyl in the dwelling of the Wise, but the foolish spendeth it up*: Or by Suretyship, *Prov.*17.18. *A man void of understanding striketh hands, and becometh Surety in the presence of his friend*: Or by Law-suits, *Prov.*18.6. *A fools lips enter into contention*: Or by speaking against persons in Authority, *Eccles.*10.12. *The lips of a fool will swallow up himself*, Prov.10.14. *The mouth of the foolish is near destruction.* Or by some other rash and indiscreet carriages.

8. Instructing our Children and Servants out of the word of God, will remove their ignorance, and make them of foolish and simple to become wise and understanding persons, and so consequently will prevent all the afore-mentioned evils which will accrue both to us and them, if they be trained up in ignorance, *Prov.*12.1. *Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge*, Prov.8.33. *Hear instruction and be wise.* Psal.19 7. *The Testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.* Prov.1.1,4. *The Proverbs of Solomon——to give subtilty to the simple, and to the young*

man knowledge and discretion. Psal. 119. 130. *The entrance of thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple.*

Sect. 4.

The corruption that is in children and servants, proveth Family-instruction to be a necessary duty.

Arg. 3. THere is not only much blindness and ignorance in the minds of our children and servants, but they have also very sinful and corrupt hearts. That we may see and understand what sin and corruption is bound up in the hearts of our children and servants, let us consider what the Scripture saith of the hearts of the sons of men. The heart of man by nature is void and destitute of all good, *Rom.* 7. 18. *I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing:* and full of evil, *Eccles.* 9. 3. *The heart of the sons of men is full of evil.*—— Yea, the seeds of the fouleſt sins, such as Murder, Adultery, Blasphemy, and the like, are in the heart of man, which will break out if they be left to themselves, *Matth.* 15. 19. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.* The inclinations of the heart to sin, even to the worst of sins, are strong and violent; so that the heart is not only set upon evil, but fully set to do evil, *Eccles.* 8. 11. *The heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.* There is such a bottomless depth of sin in their hearts, that we cannot fathom it, it is hard to express, yea, hard to understand how wicked and sinful the heart of man is: *Jer.* 17. 9. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?* And this corruption of the heart, begins to work and discover

discover it self very early, even whilst we are young, *Gen.*8.21. *The imagination of mans heart is evil from his youth*: Isai.48.8. *I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressour from the womb.*

Now seeing there is so much sin and corruption in the hearts of our children and servants, from hence it will follow, that it is our duty to train them up in the knowledge and obedience of the Word of God, whereby their hearts may be purified and sanctified; and that it is necessary that we should imploy all the skill and strength that we have in this work: for,

1. Though their hearts be exceeding sinful, as we have heard before; yet if we instruct them in the knowledge, and train them up in the obedience of the Word of God, this will be a means to purifie and sanctifie their hearts, and to reform their lives: for the word of God hath a sanctifying vertue in it, *John* 17. 17. *Sanctifie them through thy Truth, thy Word is Truth*: And being hid in the heart, it will cleanse the heart, and keep a man from sinning against God, *John* 15.3. *Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.* Psal.119.11. *Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.* Obeying and practising the word, will purifie the heart, 1 *Pet.*2.22. *Ye have purified your Souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit.*—— If we can bring our Children to take heed to their ways, and to frame them according to the word of God, we need not doubt but this will cleanse their hearts and lives, *Psal.*119.9. *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto, according to thy word.*

2. If we suffer our Children and Servants to live

without instruction, and do not labour to bring them acquainted with God, and with his holy word, there is no hope that they should be reclaimed from their sins, *Hos.* 5. 4. *They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God, for the spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them, and they have not known the Lord.* The Prophet gives this reason why they would not frame their doings to turn to the Lord, *They did not know the Lord, and the spirit of whoredoms was in them.* By the spirit of whoredoms we may understand strong and habitual inclinations to sins of uncleanness, and also to Idolatry, which is spiritual Adultery. When the mind of a man is vehemently carried out after a thing, and these impetuous motions continue and reside with him, the Scripture calls this by the name of a Spirit, as *Numb.* 5. 14. *The Spirit of Jealousie.* From this passage of the Prophet *Hosea*, we may draw this conclusion, As long as persons who have strong and habitual inclinations to that which is evil (which is the case of all Children and grown persons that are in an unregenerate condition) continue ignorant of *God*, there is no hope that they should frame their doings to turn unto the Lord. Our Children and Servants will be so far from reforming their lives without instruction, that as long as they remain ignorant of God, they will grow worse and worse, *Jer.* 9. 3. *They proceed from evil to evil, and know not me saith the Lord.* 2 Tim. 3. 13. *Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse.*

3. If we suffer our Children and Servants to walk after their own hearts lust, we shall undo them for ever; for this is the broad way that leads to destruction, for a man to walk after the lusts of his own heart, and we shall also bring down Gods Judgments upon our selves, and cause his Judgments to

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reſt upon our Families for many Generations, 1 *Sam.* 3.13,14. *I will judge his houſe for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth, becauſe his Sons made themſelves vile, and he reſtrained them not; and therefore I have ſworn unto the houſe of Eli, That the iniquity of Eli's houſe ſhall not be purged with Sacrifice nor Offering for ever.*

4. We had need employ all the skill and ſtrength that we have in teaching and educating our Children in the knowledge and fear of the Lord, becauſe it is a difficult work to change their Natures, and to ſubdue their Wills to Gods Will. *Zophar* compares man to a wild Aſſes Colt, *Job* 11.12. *For vain man would be wiſe, though man be born like a wild Aſſes Colt.* The difficulty of taming a wild Aſs, his untractable ranging diſpoſition, is elegantly ſet forth *Job* 39.7,8. *He ſcorneth the multitude of the City, neither regardeth he the crying of the Driver, the range of the mountains is his paſture, and he ſearcheth after every green thing.* Such a wild unruly Creature is man, and that from his Birth: *Man is born like a wild Aſſes Colt.* If he be not tamed whilſt he is young, he will not regard the voice of his Teachers, though multitudes labour with him one after another, it will be a difficult matter to bring him to any good order. If our Children have added to their ſinful natures, a cuſtom in ſinful courſes, it will be as hard to reclaim them as to change the Leopards ſpots, or to make the *Ethiopian* (who is naturally black) to become white, *Jer.* 13.25. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? Then may ye alſo do good, who are accuſtomed to do evil.*

SECT.

Sect. 5.

Family-Inſtruction is neceſſary for the performing of Family Duties.

Arg. 4. FAmily-Duties cannot be performed to the glory of God and the edification of our Families without Family-Inſtruction; and this proves the great obligation that lieth upon us to train up our Families in the knowledge and fear of the Lord. I will inſtance in ſeveral Duties which cannot be performed without Family-Inſtruction.

1. Prayer is a Duty to be performed in all Families; the neglect of it is ſuch a great ſin, that God ranks thoſe Families among the Heathen that do not call upon him, and threatens to pour out his fury upon them, *Jer.* 10.25. *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not upon thy Name:* Fury is more than wrath or anger, it is the higheſt degree of anger; God is not only angry, but he is filled with fury againſt, and will pour out his fury upon thoſe Families that do not call upon him. Now how ſhall our Children or Servants be able to pray without inſtruction? Or how are they like to be edified by joyning in Family-Prayer, if they be ignorant of that God to whom we pray, and of Jeſus Chriſt, in whoſe name our prayers are offered up to God, and of thoſe things which are asked of *God*, when we pray to him in his Sons name. That knowledge is neceſſarily required to inable us to pray, and alſo to joyn in prayer ſo as to receive edification, (and if knowledge, then alſo inſtruction, which breedeth knowledge) is evident from ſuch Scriptures as theſe, *Rom.* 10.14.

10.14. *How then ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed, and how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how ſhall they hear without a Preacher?* 1 Cor.14,15. *I will pray with the Spirit, and will pray with the underſtanding alſo,* Job 37.19. *Teach us what we ſhall ſay unto him, for we can not order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs.* Ignorant worſhip is not accepted of God; Chriſt reproved the *Samaritans* for worſhipping they knew not what, and tells them, that ſuch as expect Life and Salvation from God, muſt worſhip him underſtandingly, *John* 4.22. *Ye worſhip ye know not what, we know what we worſhip, for ſalvation is of the Jews.* If they be wholly ignorant, when they are joyning in holy Duties, as in prayer, or in praiſing God, though he that performs the Duties, performeth them well, and in a ſpiritual manner; yet ſuch as are ignorant of God, and the things of God, will not be edified by thoſe Duties, 1 *Cor.* 14.16,17. *When thou ſhalt bleſs with the Spirit, how ſhall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned ſay, Amen; ſeeing he underſtandeth not what thou ſayeſt? For thou verily giveſt thanks well, but the other is not edified.* The Apoſtle ſpeaketh here of giving thanks in an unknown Tongue, but though we uſe a known Tongue in prayer, or praiſing God, yet if our Families have no knowledge of God, they will receive little or no edification by joyning with us, when we pray to, or praiſe the Lord. If we do not train up our Families in the fear, as well as in the knowledge of God, though they ſhould learn to pray, their prayers will avail nothing with God, *John* 9.31. *Now we know that God heareth not Sinners; but if any man be a worſhipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth. Iſa.*1.15. *And when ye ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes; yea, when ye make*

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many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood.

2. It is the Duty of every Member of our Families to praiſe the Lord, and to give him thanks for his mercies, *Pſal.*145.2. *Let all fleſh bleſs his holy Name for ever and ever.* Pſal.150.6. *Let every thing that hath breath praiſe the Lord.* 1 Theſ.5.18. *In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God in Chriſt Jeſus concerning you.* It is a duty to be performed every day, *Pſal.*145.2. *Every day will I bleſs thee.* Pſal.92.1,2. *It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to ſing praiſes unto thy Name, O moſt High; to ſhew forth thy loving kindneſs in the morning, and thy faithfulneſs every night.* It is a duty to be performed not only by our ſelves when we are alone, but all the members in the Family ſhould joyn together in bleſſing and praiſing God, *Pſal.*135.19. *Bleſs the Lord, O houſe of Aaron.* Pſal.34.3. *O magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his Name together.* Deut.14.26. *Thou ſhalt rejoyce, thou and thy houſhold.* Now how can our Families bleſs and praiſe *God* for his mercies, if they be not taught that all the good things they have, come from God; and alſo taught who that God is that gives them all good things, and how and in what manner they ſhould expreſs their thankfulneſs unto him? We find that when the Scripture ſpeaketh of praiſing God, it often intimates that we ſhould praiſe him with underſtanding: *Pſal.* 47.6,7. *Sing praiſes to God, ſing praiſes; ſing praiſes unto our King, ſing praiſes: For God is the King of the Earth, ſing ye praiſes with underſtanding.* 1 Cor.14. 15. *I will ſing with the Spirit, and I will ſing with the underſtanding alſo:* Which implieth, that the Lord cannot be praiſed by the ſons of men in an acceptable manner, if they be not endued with knowledge and underſtanding.

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3. It is our Duty to exhort our Children and Servants to flee from ſin, and to follow after Righteouſneſs, to love, and fear, and ſerve the Lord, and to walk in his ways, *&c.* *Heb.*3.13. *Exhort one another daily, while it is called to day, leſt any of you be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin.* Now if we would have our exhortations to take place, we muſt joyn Doctrine or Inſtruction with our Exhortations. 2 *Tim.*4.2. *Exhort with all long ſuffering and doctrine.* If we do not inſtruct them wherein the nature of thoſe Duties lieth unto which we exhort them, and how and in what manner they ſhould be performed, we ſhall be like thoſe that beat the air, our Exhortations will be of no advantage to them.

4. It is our Duty to reprove our Children and Servants when we ſee them negligent in their duty, or committing any ſin againſt God, *Lev.*19.17. *Thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy Neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him.* If we muſt rebuke a Neighbour, then much more thoſe of our own houſe, when they ſin againſt the Lord. Now inſtruction makes way for reproof; one word of reproof to a man inſtructed with wiſdom and underſtanding, will do more good than an hundred ſtripes will do towards the reformation of an ignorant fooliſh perſon: *Prov.*17.10. *A reproof entreth more into a wiſe man, than an hundred ſtripes into a fool.* We ſhall find it a very difficult matter to faſten a reproof upon our Children and Servants, ſo as to make it take place, and do them good, if they be without underſtanding. The like may be ſaid of other Duties which we ought to perform towards our Children and Servants, they cannot be performed ſucceſsfully if we ſuffer our Families to be without Inſtruction.

Sect.

Sect. 6.

We have Gods example for teaching our Children and Servants.

Arg. 5. GOD teacheth and instructeth his Children and Servants, and therefore it is our Duty to teach and instruct our Children and our Servants; for we ought to be followers of God, *Ephes.* 5.1. *Be ye therefore followers of God as dear Children.* In order to our imitation of God in this practice, Let us consider,

1. Who they are whom God teacheth; all his Children and Servants from the greatest of them to the least; he leaves not one of them without instruction, *Isa.* 54.13. *And all thy Children shall be taught of the Lord:* Jer. 31.34. *They shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord.* Deut. 33.3. *Yea, he loved the people; all his Saints are in thy hand, and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words.* So should we teach and instruct every one of our Children and Servants, from the least to the greatest.

2. God begins to teach his Children betimes: *Psal.* 71.17. *O God thou hast taught me from my youth.* So should we begin early with our Children, 2 *Tim.* 3.15. *From a Child thou hast known the holy Scriptures.*

3. God teacheth his children and servants knowledge, *Psal.* 94.10. *He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?* He teacheth them to know himself *Jer.* 24.7. *I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord:* And to know and believe in his Son Jesus Christ, *John* 6.45. *It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God: every man there-*

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fore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me. And to love one another, 1 *Theſ.*4.9. *Ye your ſelves are taught of God to love one another.* He inſtructs them to ſhun and to avoid evil company, and evil examples, *Iſa.*8.11. *For the Lord ſpake thus unto me with a ſtrong hand, and inſtructed me that I ſhould not walk in the way of this people.* He teacheth them by his grace to deny all ungodlineſs and to live righteous and holy lives, *Tit.*2.12. *The grace of God that bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, That denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, in this preſent world.* He inſtructs them how to order and manage the works of their Callings with Wiſdom and Diſcretion, *Iſa.*28.24,25,26. *Doth the Plowman plow all day to ſow? Doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not caſt abroad the Fitches, and ſcatter the Cummin, and caſt in the principal Wheat, and the appointed Barley, and the Rye in their place? For his God doth inſtruct him to diſcretion, and doth teach him.* He inſtructs them how they ſhould walk, and what they ſhould ſay and do, and how they ſhould order their Converſations aright in all things, *Pſal.*32.8. *I will inſtruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou ſhalt go,* Exod. 4.12,15. *I will be with thy mouth, and will teach thee what thou ſhalt ſay——and will teach you what ye ſhall do.* 2 Chron.32.22. *The Lord guided them on every ſide.* Pſal.107.7. *He led them forth by the right way.* He ſhews them the Path of Life, and guides them in the way to Heaven: *Pſal.*16.11. *Thou wilt ſhew me the Path of Life:* Pſal.73.24. *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel, and afterwards receive me unto glory.* Herein we ſhould imitate God, we ſhould teach our Children and ſervants to know God, and his *Son* Jeſus Chriſt,

Christ, and to believe in Christ, and to love one another, and to forsake evil company, and to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly, in this present world: We should instruct them how to follow their Calling, and how to speak and walk, and to order their conversations aright in all things, we should shew them the path of Life, and guide them therein, that they may obtain eternal salvation in the world to come.

4. God teacheth his children and servants out of his holy Word, *Psal.*94.12. *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy Law.* The Lord builds up all his houshold in knowledge, faith, and holiness, upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles; that is, the Doctrine delivered in the *Scriptures* by the Prophets and Apostles, *Ephes.*2.19,20. *Ye are of the Houshold of God, and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone.* He instructs penitent persons by making known his word to them: *Prov.*1.23. *Turn you at my Reproof; behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.* *David* describes Gods teaching his people *Israel* thus, *Psal.*147.19. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.* In like manner, when we teach our children and servants, we should teach them out of the word of God, and establish them in the knowledge, belief, and practice, of the Doctrine delivered in the Scriptures by the Prophets, and Apostles.

5. The Lord condescends to teach such as are of a froward and perverse disposition: The Children of *Israel* were a perverse generation, *Deut.*32.5. *They are a perverse and crooked generation*: yet the Lord

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taught and instructed *Israel*: *Vers.* 10. *He found him in a desart Land, and in the waste howling Wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye*: And this he did notwithstanding they were a very froward people, as *Moses* tells us again, *vers.* 20. *They are a very froward Generation.* In like manner, though our Children or Servants should be of a froward perverse spirit, yet we should not forbear instructing them.

6. The Lord imprints and fastens in the minds and hearts of his Children and Servants those Instructions which he giveth them; hence he is said to seal their instruction, *Job* 33.14. *He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.* So should we endeavour to imprint those Instructions which we give our Families, upon their minds, that they may retain them in their memories as long as they live.

Sect. 7.

Mothers, as well as Fathers, must instruct their Children.

Quest. IT may be some will here demand, Is it not the Duty of Mothers, as well as of Fathers, to teach their Children?

Answ. Although the Scripture doth forbid Women teaching in publick Assemblies, 1 *Cor.* 14.34. *Let your women keep silence in the Churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the Law*: 1 Tim. 2. 11, 12. *Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection—But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.* Yet it doth allow them to teach their Children and Servants; and though this work doth lie chiefly upon Fa-

thers to teach Gods word unto their Children, as appeareth by the ſpecial charge that is given to them, *Epheſ.*6.4. *Iſa.* 38.19. *Pſal.*78.5. yet it is the duty of Mothers alſo to inſtruct and watch over their Children and Servants. For the proving hereof, and the ſtirring up of Mothers to joyn with, and to be helpful to their Husbands, in inſtructing their Children and Servants, I ſhall propoſe to them theſe following Conſiderations:

1. It hath been the practice of godly women in former times, to inſtruct their Children in the knowledge of the Scriptures, which the holy Ghoſt hath left upon record, as a monument of their praiſe, as long as the world ſhall continue, and as a Pattern to be followed by all women that fear God. *Solomons* mother, though ſhe was a Queen, did not look upon it as a work beneath her, to inſtruct her Son; but taught him a Prophecy containing excellent Leſſons concerning Chaſtity and Temperance, defending the Oppreſſed, *&c. Prov.*31.1. *The words of King Lemuel, the Prophecy which his mother taught him:* What this Prophecy was that his mother taught him, is ſet down in the following verſes; *Solomon* was inſtructed by his Father, *Prov.*4.3,4. *I was my Fathers Son—he taught me alſo*; yet *Solomon*'s mother did not think her ſelf excuſed from teaching her Son, becauſe his Father inſtructed him, but ſhe joyn'd with her husband, and teacheth him a Prophecy. Now if thoſe women who have godly Husbands that inſtruct their Families, muſt alſo inſtruct their Children; how much more is it the duty of thoſe women who have careleſs and negligent Husbands that regard not their Families, to be diligent in teaching their Children and Servants? Another example we have in *Lois* and *Eunice*; *Lois* being converted to the Chriſtian

Chriſtian Religion, trains up her Daughter *Eunice* in the faith of Chriſt; *Eunice* being inſtructed in the faith of Chriſt, inſtructs her Son *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 1.9.

2. Children are commanded to hearken to, and not forſake the inſtruction which their Mothers (as well as which their Fathers) give them out of the Law of God, *Prov.* 1.8. *My Son hear the inſtruction of thy Father, and forſake not the Law of thy Mother*; which implies, That Mothers, as well as Fathers, are to teach Gods Laws to their Children.

3. It is mentioned as one of the Vertues of a vertuous woman, *That ſhe looketh well to the ways of her Houſhold*, Prov. 31.27. and this overſight that ſhe takes of the ways of her Houſhhold, conduceth ſo much to the good of her Children, that it will cauſe them to bleſs God for her as long as they live, as the next verſe implieth, *Her Children ariſe up, and call her bleſſed*, verſ. 28. And the Apoſtle *Paul* adviſeth elder women to be *Teachers of good things*, Tit. 2. 3. And he tells them both whom they ſhould teach, *younger women*, and what Leſſons they ſhould teach younger women, verſ. 4. 5. which is to be underſtood of inſtilling thoſe Principles into their Children and Maid Servants, how they ſhould demean themſelves when God ſhall bring them into a married eſtate, and alſo of inſtructing their Neighbours and Acquaintance when they viſit them, and have occaſion to confer with them.

4. The Mother as well as the Father doth concur to the conveying of a ſinful nature unto their Children, *Pſal.* 51.5. *In ſin did my Mother conceive me*: And therefore Mothers ought by their prayers, and

tears, and inſtructions, and the uſe of all good means, to endeavour after the Converſion and Regeneration of their Children, as well as their Fathers.

5. Children are very apt to follow their Mothers example, in ſo much that it's become a Proverb, *As is the Mother, ſo is the Daughter*; and the truth of this Proverb is ſuch, that God himſelf alloweth of it, *Ezek.* 16.44. *Behold every one that uſeth Proverbs ſhall uſe this Proverb againſt thee, As is the Mother, ſo is the Daughter.* So that if Mothers live religiouſly, and ſhew a good example to their Children, and inſtruct them out of Gods word, there is great hope that their Children will become Religious alſo. It is remarkable both amongſt the good and evil Kings that were in *Judah* and *Iſrael*, that the Scripture doth frequently record their Mothers names; as for good Kings, we may ſee 1 *Kings* 22. 42,43. 2 *Kings* 18.2,3. and 22.12. And for evil Kings, 2 *King.*8.26,27. 1 *Kings* 15.2,3. which ſheweth that the Mothers example and carriage amongſt her Children, hath a great influence upon them, to make them either good or evil.

6. Mothers have greater opportunities to be inſtilling good things into their Children, than their Fathers, for they are oftener with them, eſpecially whilſt they are young, as they are dreſſing or undreſſing them, or giving them meat, or ſitting with them at work, or walking abroad with them, they ſhould be talking with them of the word of God, *Deut.*6. 6,7. And every one is to do good according to the opportunities that God puts into their hands, *Gal.* 6.10.

7. Hereby Mothers may do great ſervice for Chriſt,

Chriſt, in training up Children for the Lord: All the good that ſuch Children ſhall do in their generation, ſhall redound to the Mothers Comfort and Reward. The Apoſtle mentioneth the bringing up of Children (by which is meant bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord) amongſt the firſt and chiefeſt good works which women are able to do in their generation, 1 *Tim.* 5.10. *Well reported of for good works, if ſhe have brought up Children.*—

8. What ſervice women do for Chriſt, he takes as kindly as he doth what men do for him, when there was a woman poured upon his head a Box of pretious Oyntment, though the Diſciples had indignation, yet the Lord Jeſus took it well from her, and ſaid that this act of the woman ſhould be had in remembrance, and be ſpoken of to her praiſe, as long as the Goſpel ſhould be preached in the world, *Mat.* 26.13. *Verily I ſay unto you, Whereſoever this Goſpel ſhall be preached in the whole world, there alſo this that this woman hath done, ſhall be told for a memorial of her.* If you that are Mothers teach Gods word to your Children, and labour to bring them up in the knowledge and fear of God, the Lord Jeſus will take this more kindly from you, than he took this box of pretious Oyntment from this woman, which anointed his body againſt his burial: And that may be evidenced ſeverall ways:

1. Chriſt was more pleaſed with thoſe that minded his word, than with thoſe that were at the coſt and trouble to provide for his Body; as appears from the caſe of *Mary* and *Martha*, *Mary ſat at Jeſus feet, and heard his word, but Martha was cumbred with much ſerving*, Luk. 10.38,39. Hereupon *Martha*

tha complains to Chriſt, that her ſiſter had left her to ſerve alone, and deſires him to bid *Mary* to help her; but Chriſt commends *Mary*'s choice, and her work, who was employed about his word, above *Martha*'s, who was employed in preparing food for his Body, and thoſe that were with him, *Verſ.* 40, 41, 42.

2. The Lord Jeſus loves your Childrens Souls as well as he loves his own Body; he gave his own Body to be crucified to ſave your Childrens Souls; And therefore doubtleſs it is as acceptable to ſee you endeavouring to ſave your Childrens Souls, by inſtructing and teaching them out of his holy Word, as it was to have his Body anointed with pretious Ointment.

3. The Name of God and Chriſt is like pretious Ointment, *Cant.* 1. 3. *Thy Name is as Ointment poured forth:* —— Yea it is more precious than any Ointment in the World. And when you bring your Children acquainted with the Name of God and Chriſt, by inſtructing them out of the Word of God, you convey that to them which is beyond all the pretious Ointment in the world.

4. The Ointment that was poured on Chriſts Body did but little, if any thing, advantage the body of Chriſt, he accepted it not ſo much for the advantage he had by it, as he did for the Faith and Love which the Woman manifeſted in this work. But by inſtructing your Children out of the Word of God, you ſhall greatly promote the good and welfare of their pretious Souls.

If the Lord Jesus did so kindly accept the Womans anointing his body with precious Ointment, that he recorded her praise in the Gospel, and will have the Memorial thereof preserved in all Ages throughout the whole World: Then doubt not, you that are Mothers, that if you instruct your Children in the knowledge of his Word, but he will accept this very kindly at your hands, and cause this good Work of yours to be had in eternal Remembrance.

CHAP. II.

Motives to ſtir up Parents and Maſters of Families, to inſtruct their Children and Servants in the Knowledge, and to train them up in the obedience of the Scriptures.

IN the former Chapter I have proved it to be the Duty of Parents and Maſters of Families, to train up their Children and Servants in the knowledge and obedience of the Scriptures: I ſhall now proceed to lay down ſome Motives to ſtir up thoſe that neglect this good work, to be diligent, conſtant and conſcientious in the performance of their Duty, in teaching and inſtructing their Families.

SECT. I.

Inſtructing our Children and Servants out of the Scriptures will be a means of their Converſion; Reaſons why we ſhould endeavour their Converſion.

1 *Motive.* INſtructing your Children and Servants out of the word of God will be a powerful and an effectual means to convert and ſave their ſouls: For, *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul*, Pſal.19.7. And, *The Goſpel is the power of God to ſalvation*, Rom.1.16. *The Commandment is a Lamp, and the Law is Light, and Reproofs of inſtruction*

inſtruction are the way of Life, Prov. 6. 23. Though they be ſuch as walk in ſinful and deſtructive courſes, by teaching and inſtructing them out of the Scriptures, they may be converted from their ſins unto God, *Pſal.* 5. 13. *I will teach Tranſgreſſors thy ways, and Sinners ſhall be converted unto thee.* We read of *Cornelius*, that both he himſelf and all his houſe were ſaved by the word wherewith they were inſtructed by *Peter*, *Act.* 11. 14. *Who ſhall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy houſe ſhall be ſaved.* In like manner if Governours of Families did carefully inſtruct their Families out of the word of God, they might in ſo doing both ſave themſelves and all their houſe: With what diligence, with what ſpeed, with what alacrity, with what a reſolved minde to perſevere therein under all diſcouragements, ſhould you ſet upon this work, ſeeing there is hope that hereby you may ſave your Children and your Servants Souls? That this argument may have the greater force to perſwade and prevail with you to ſet your hearts to this work; Conſider,

1. What great worth and excellency there is in an immortal Soul: The Soul of the pooreſt Child or Servant in your Families, is more worth than all the ſubſtance in your houſes, than all the Riches you have gotten or can get as long as you live; yea, than the whole world, *Mark* 8. 36. *What ſhall it profit a man if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own Soul?* And therefore you ſhould ſpend more thoughts and pains about ſaving your Children and Servants Souls, than you would do to gain the whole world, if there were a probability that by your care and induſtry you might get into your poſſeſſion all the good things that are in the world. There is ſuch an excellency in the Soul, that when any one

ſinner

ſinner is brought to repentance, whereby his Soul is put into a ſtate of Salvation, all the Angels of Heaven rejoyce at this glad Tidings, *Luk.*15.10. *There is joy in the preſence of the Angels of God over one ſinner that repenteth.*

2. By converting your Children and Servants, you ſhall recover their ſouls from the power of the Devil: Before their converſion he rules and carries them captive to this and the other ſin, as he pleaſeth, *Epheſ.*2.2. 2 *Tim.*2.26. But when they are converted, they are freed and delivered from the power of Satan. The Converſion of a ſinner is the opening *of his eyes, and turning him from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God*, Act. 26.18. It is Gods delivering of a ſinner from the power of darkneſs, and tranſlating him into the Kingdom of his dear Son, *Col.*1.13. If your Children were under Turkiſh Slavery, would you ſpare any pains or coſt to redeem them from the hands of the Turks? It is far worſe to have them under the power of Satan, than under the power of the Turks. Suppoſe the Devil had gotten poſſeſſion of your Childrens Bodies, and ſhould torture them, as he did the woman of *Canaan's* Daughter, who cried out to Chriſt, *Mat.*15.22. *Have mercy upon me, O Lord, my Daughter is grievouſly vexed with a Devil*; or ſhould rend and tear them, as he did that young man whoſe Father made his moan to Chriſt after this manner, *My Son hath a dumb Spirit, and whereſoever he taketh him he teareth him, and he ſometh and gnaſheth with his teeth, and he pineth away,——and oft times it hath caſt him into the fire, and into the waters to deſtroy him*, Mark 19. 17,18,22. would not this cauſe you to mourn, and faſt, and pray, and to uſe all means poſſible to get your Childrens Bodies delivered from the tyranny

of

of Satan? And would you not be reſtleſs until you had obtained their deliverance? To have your childrens Souls under the power of the Devil, and to have them drawn ſometimes into one foul ſin, and then into another, is far worſe and more dangerous then to have their Bodies at his command; and yet this is their caſe, as long as they remain unconverted their Souls are under the power of ſin and Satan. How ſhould this cauſe you to ſtrive with God in prayer night and day, and labour with your utmoſt diligence in the uſe of all means to get their Souls converted to God?

3. By converting your Children and Servants, you ſhall prevent their dying in their ſins, and ſave them from the wrath of God, and the torments of Hell, *Jam.* 5.19,20. *Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the ſinner from the error of his way, ſhall ſave a Soul from death, and ſhall hide a multitude of ſins*: What a great, what a good work is this, *to ſave a ſoul from death?* Shall we think any pains too much to ſave immortal Souls from eternal Death? If you ſaw any of your Children ready to fall into a fiery Furnace, which would conſume them to Aſhes in a moment, you would ſuddenly lay hold on them, and prevent, if it were poſſible, their falling into the furnace of fire: Hell is called *A Furnace of Fire*, Mat. 13.42. As long as your Children live in ignorance, and in an unconverted condition, they are in danger every day to fall into this furnace of fire. And doth it not concern you then, to prevent with all poſſible ſpeed their falling into everlaſting burnings?

4. Conſider what great pains Jeſus Chriſt took to ſave and convert Souls: The great end of his coming

ing into the world and taking our Nature upon him, was to ſave Souls, *Luk.*19.10. *The Son of man is come to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt:* When he was upon the earth he was ſo diligent in teaching and inſtructing the people, that he did not omit his work one day, *Luk.*19.47. *He taught daily in the Temple:* He was ſo diligent to teach and inſtruct the people, that he could not find ſpare time to eat his Bread, which cauſed ſome of his friends to think and ſay he was beſide himſelf, *Mark* 3.20. He was not only very diligent in preaching, but was content to lay down his life to ſave our ſouls. Shall not this example of Chriſt provoke you to give all diligence to ſave both your own, and the ſouls of all that are committed to your Charge?

5. God will give a greater degree of Glory to thoſe that are inſtrumental to convert and ſave ſouls, than to other Saints: For whereas they ſhall ſhine only as the Firmament, they that convert others ſhall ſhine as the Stars in the Firmament, *Dan.*12.3. *They that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs as the Stars for ever and ever.*

6. You cannot approve your ſelves to be Righteous Perſons either to God or Men, if you do not regard what becomes of your childrens and ſervants ſouls; *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beaſt, Prov.*12.10. If this be true, how can they account themſelves righteous perſons who have no regard what becomes of the ſouls of their Children? If a Beaſt go aſtray, though it be not our own but our Neighbours, yea our Enemies, we muſt by no means neglect to bring it back, *Exod.*23.4. *If thou meet thine Enemies Ox or his Aſs going aſtray, thou ſhalt ſurely bring it back to him again.* If we are bound ſo ſtraightly

ſtraightly to bring back an Ox or an Aſs of our Enemies when he goes aſtray, then what obligations lie upon us to bring home to God our own Children, and our houſhold Servants, when we ſee them going aſtray from the Lord?

Sect. 2.

Such as neglect Family-Inſtruction, are guilty of their Children and Servants Blood. How great an Evil it is to be guilty of the Blood of Souls.

2 *Motive.* Such Parents and Maſters of Families as neglect to train up their Children and Servants in the fear of the Lord, and in the knowledge of his word, are the inſtrumental cauſes of their Damnation, and their Children and Servants Blood will be laid to their charge, and be required at their hands. For it is evident from the word of God, that all ſuch as live and die ignorant of God, having attained to years of diſcretion, ſhall be deſtroyed for ever, without having any mercy ſhewed to them, 2 *Theſ.* 1.7,8,9. *The Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power*: Iſa. 27.11. —*It is a people of no underſtanding, therefore he that made them will have no mercy on them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour*: Hoſ. 4.6. *My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge.* Now if the Lord will condemn our Children and Servants for their ignorance, and their ignorance proceed from our neglect of inſtructing them, are not we the cauſe of their condemnation? Such as have the Rule and Government

vernment of Families are in the nature and condition of Watchmen, as well as those that bear Rule in the Church, and must give an account for those souls that are committed to their charge, *Heb.*13.17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account.* And as for those that are placed in the condition of Watchmen, if any persons over whom God hath made them Watchmen be lost through their neglect to instruct them in their duty, or to reclaim them from their sins, the Blood of those that perish shall be required at the Watchmans hands, *Ezek.*3.17,18. *Son of man, I have made thee a Watchman unto the House of Israel, therefore hear the word at my Mouth, and give them warning from Me, when I say to the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand:* What Inditement is brought in against the Jews? *Jer.*2.34. *In thy Skirts is found the Blood of the Souls of the poor Innocents—I have not found it by secret search, but upon all these.* The like may be said of many Masters of Families, *In their Skirts will be found the Blood of the Souls of their Children and Servants: In their Skirts*——That is, it will plainly and evidently appear unto all men at the day of Judgment, that they are guilty of the Blood of the Souls of their Children and Servants, for want of instructing and training them up in the fear of God: We cannot possibly be clear from the blood of those that are committed to our charge, if either through wilfulness, or through sloth and negligence, we forbear to instruct them in those things that are necessary to their Salvation; but if we do our duty, and they perish

riſh in their ſins, their Blood ſhall be upon their own head, *Act.*20.26,27. *I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not ſhunned to declare unto you all the Counſel of God*: Did Parents and Maſters of Families ſeriouſly conſider what it is to have their Children and Servants die eternally, and that through their neglecting to teach and train them up in the fear of God, did they alſo conſider what it is to have the blood of Souls laid to their charge, it would ſtir them up to be diligent in inſtructing their Families, unleſs they be ſuch as have loſt all regard to their own and their Families welfare.

To preſs home this conſideration with the greater efficacy, I ſhall ſuggeſt to you three or four things more under this head. As,

1. The death of a Child goes near a Parents heart. *Hagar* could not endure to ſee her Child die, and therefore when ſhe thought he would die, ſhe gets a great way off from him, and ſat down and wept, *Gen.*21.16. *She ſaid, Let me not ſee the death of the Child; and ſhe ſat over againſt him, and lift up her voice and wept.* When tydings came to *David* of *Abſolom*'s death, he was exceedingly troubled at it, 2*Sam.*18.33. *And the King was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, thus he ſaid, O my Son Abſolom, my Son, my Son Abſolom; would God I had died for thee, O Abſolom, my Son, my Son!* When *Jacob* did but ſuppoſe that *Joſeph* was dead, though he had eleven Sons living, his ſorrow was ſo great, that he refuſed to be comforted, *Gen.*37.34,35. *Jacob rent his cloaths, and put ſackcloth upon his loyns, and mourned for his Son many days; and all his Sons, and all his Daughters roſe up to comfort him, but he refuſed to be comforted; and he ſaid, For I will go down*

into

into the Grave unto my Son mourning: Thus his Father wept for him. If it be ſo grievous to Parents to ſee their Children deprived of their natural life, how ſhould it pierce their hearts to have them deprived of eternal Life? If they are ſo grieved at the death of their Bodies, how ſhould they lay to heart the death of their Souls? How ſhould it wound them to have their Children caſt into the lake that burneth with fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond death; where they ſhall be always burning, and yet never be conſumed; they ſhall be always dying, and yet never be dead? yea, how ſhould it affect them when they conſider that they themſelves have through their negligence been the cauſe of their Childrens dying the ſecond death.

2. It would pierce a flinty heart to ſee Children dying in their Parents Arms for want of Bread. When *Jeremiah* ſaw little Children in the time of Famine, ſome dying in the ſtreets, others breathing out their ſouls in their Mothers Boſoms for want of Bread to ſuſtain their Lives, it made him weep till his eyes and his heart failed him with grief, *Lam.*2. 11,12. *Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my Liver is poured upon the earth, for the deſtruction of the Daughter of my People, becauſe the Children and the Sucklings ſwoon in the ſtreets of the City; they ſay to their Mothers, Where is Corn and Wine? When they ſwooned as the wounded in the Streets of the City, when their Soul was poured out into their Mothers Boſom.* This is a ſorrowful ſight, but it is far more dreadful to ſee Children periſhing to all eternity in their Parents Houſes, for want of their communicating to them the Bread of Life, than to ſee them die by Famine.

3. It is an unſpeakable loſs for a man to loſe one Soul:

Soul: Though he do not loſe his Children and Servants Souls, though he loſe not one Soul beſides his own, the gain of the whole world will not make up this loſs; as appears from the fore-quoted Scripture *Mar.*8.36. *What ſhall it profit a man if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own Soul?* If it be ſuch a great loſs for a man to loſe his own Soul, what will it be for a man, beſides the loſs of his own, to be charged with the loſs of the Souls of his Children, and of all that ever were committed to his charge.

4. Blood is a crying ſin, the cry of it reacheth to the Heavens, and calls to God for vengeance, *Gen.*4.10. *What haſt thou done? The voyce of thy Brothers Blood crieth unto me from the ground:* And bringeth a great curſe on thoſe that are guilty of ſhedding it, Verſ.11. *And now art thou curſed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy Brothers Blood from thy hand.* Verſ.12. *A fugitive and vagabond ſhalt thou be upon the earth.* Although all Blood crieth loud, yet none crieth like the Blood of Souls. As much as the Soul ſurpaſſeth the Body in excellency, ſo much greater is their ſin who are acceſſary to the deſtroying of Souls, than theirs who only take away the life of the Body. It is ſpoken of as a dreadful Judgment to have the Stones and Timber of a Mans Houſe crying out againſt him, (which will be the lot of thoſe that get or build Houſes by unrighteous means) *Hab.*2.11. *The Stone ſhall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the Timber ſhall anſwer it.* The man that is in this caſe can have but little joy in his Houſe, either by night or by day. But what is this to the cry of ſuch Souls as periſh by our means, who will be crying out againſt us to all eternity? What *Zipporah* ſaid to *Moſes*, by reaſon of the Circumciſion, *Surely a bloody Husband*

art thou to me, Exod. 4. 25, 26. The like will many women ſay to their Husbands, who periſh for want of their inſtructing them, Surely a bloody Husband haſt thou been unto me; and Children will cry out againſt their Fathers, for ſuffering them to die and be damned for want of inſtruction, Surely a bloody Father haſt thou been unto me; and Servants will cry out againſt their Maſters, Surely a bloody Maſter haſt thou been unto me. To undo a man in his Eſtate by oppreſſion, or violent taking away his Goods, is a mighty ſin, there are dreadful things threatned againſt ſuch as are guilty of this ſin, *Job* 20. 19. to 29. *Becauſe he hath oppreſſed and hath forſaken the poor, becauſe he hath violently taken away an houſe which he built not; ſurely he ſhall not feel quietneſs in his belly, he ſhall not ſave of that which he deſireth, there ſhall none of his meat be left, therefore ſhall no man look for his goods; in the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtraits; every hand of the wicked ſhall come upon him: When he is about to fill his belly, God ſhall caſt the fury of his wrath upon him, and ſhall rain it upon him while he is eating: He ſhall flee from the iron weapon, and the Bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through; it is drawn and cometh out of the Body, yea the gliſtering Sword cometh out of his Gall; terrours are upon him, all darkneſs ſhall be hid in his ſecret place, a fire not blown ſhall conſume him. It ſhall go ill with him that is left in his Tabernacle, the Heavens ſhall reveal his iniquity, and the earth ſhall riſe up againſt him: the increaſe of his houſe ſhall depart, and his goods ſhall flow away in the day of his wrath.* To undo a man body and Soul to all eternity in the world to come, is a far greater ſin, than to undo a man in his eſtate in this world: And if ſuch dreadful things are denounced againſt the Oppreſſor, what ſhall be done to the Soul-murderer?

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5. He that neglecteth or refuseth to instruct his Family, is as certainly guilty of the Blood of their Souls, as he that suffereth his Family to starve by neglecting or refusing to give them that food which should preserve their Lives, is guilty of destroying their natural Life: for as surely as the Body will perish without its food, so surely will the Soul perish without instruction, *Prov.*5.23. *He shall die without instruction.* Prov.29.28. *Where there is no vision the people perish.*

Sect. 3.

Instructing our Children out of the Scriptures instils Wisdom into them; the Advantages that will come to them by being endued with Wisdom.

3 *Motive.* BY instructing our Children and Servants out of the Word of God, we shall furnish them with Wisdom and Understanding, whereby they will become prudent persons. Though they be young and simple, yet Gods word will make them wise and discreet, *Psal.*19.7. *The Testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple:* Psal.119.130. *The entrance of thy Word giveth Light, it giveth understanding to the simple:* Prov.1.1,4. *The Proverbs of Solomon——To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion:* Prov.19.20. *Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.* It was by Gods word that *David* attained to such eminency in wisdom, that he became wiser than the Ancients, and all his Teachers, *Psal.*119 99,100. No Persons or Nations under Heaven are so wise as they that are acquainted with, and give heed to, the Word of God, *Deut.*4. 6. *Keep therefore and do them, for this is your wisdom*

and understanding in the sight of the Nations, which shall hear all these Statutes, and say, Surely this great Nation is a wise and understanding People. By being acquainted with the word, they shall attain to wisdom in Civil Things, and Divine; in things pertaining to God, and to Men: *Prov.*31.4. *My Son, forget not my Law, but let thine heart keep my Commandments; so shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and Man.* Yea, by instructing our Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures, we shall convey to them the best wisdom that is attained by the sons of men, and that is, to be wise to salvation, 2 *Tim.*3.15. *From a Child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* Seeing then that instructing of our Families out of the Scriptures, will be a means of enduing our children and servants with wisdom and understanding, this may be of great force to stir us up to diligence in teaching them Gods holy word, especially if we consider how many, and what great advantages come to our children and servants by being furnished with VVisdom and Understanding. I will mention a few.

1. To leave our Children endued wisdom, is better then to leave them great Riches: *For Wisdom is better than Rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it,* Prov.8.11. *How much better is it to get wisdom than Gold, and to get understanding, rather to be chosen than Silver,* Prov.16.16. VVisdom is a greater Ornament and a more lovely Jewel than a multitude of Rubies and pretious Stones, *Prov.*20.15. *There is Gold and a multitude of Rubies, but the Lips of Knowledge are a pretious Jewel.* VVisdom is of that excellency that it far surpasseth all the Silver

and

and Gold, and pretious Stones in the world: *Job* 28. 16, 17, 18. *It cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir, with the precious Onyx, or the Saphir, the Gold and the Cryſtal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it ſhall not be for Jewels of fine Gold; no mention ſhall be made of Coral, or of Pearls: for the price of Wiſdom is above Rubies.* How deſirous are moſt Parents to leave their Children great Eſtates? If Wiſdom be better than all the Riches of the world, why ſhould we not deſire and labour more to leave them endued with VViſdom, than to leave them great Riches?

2. If we leave them endued with VViſdom, though they be poor, we leave them better than if we left them Kings and Princes deſtitute of VViſdom: *Eccleſ.* 4. 13. *Better is a poor and a wiſe Child, than an old and fooliſh King*: Many perſons who have aſpiring minds, would ſpare no pains to make their Children Kings and Princes, if they ſaw any poſſibility to effect it; why then ſhould we be backward to convey that to our Children which will be a greater advantage to them, than the promoting of them to be Kings.

3. Wiſdom will make our Children of an excellent Spirit: *Prov.* 17. 27. *A man of underſtanding is of an excellent Spirit.* An excellent Spirit is a great Ornament to a man, and to be preferred above Nobility of Birth, Beauty, Riches, or any external Accompliſhments. *Darius* finding in *Daniel* an excellent Spirit, preferred him above all the Princes and Nobles in his Kingdom, *Dan.* 6. 3. *Then Daniel was preferred above the Preſidents and Princes, becauſe an excellent Spirit was in him, and the King thought to ſet him over the whole Realm.*

4. Wiſdom and Underſtanding will make the

Members of our Family uſeful in their Generation, in whatſoever places and ſtations they ſhall be fixed by the Providence of God. What bleſſing was prayed for on *Boaz* his behalf by his Friends, *Do thou worthily in Ephratah*, Ruth 4.11. The ſame ſhall fall upon our Children, if we train them up in acquaintance with God. They ſhall do worthily in the places where God caſts their lot, although their lot be caſt in evil times and ſinful places, *Dan.*11.32. *Such as do wickedly againſt the Covenant ſhall be corrupt by Flatteries; but the people that do know their God, ſhall be ſtrong and do exploits.* By being endued with Wiſdom and Underſtanding, they will prove great Bleſſings to the Families, Cities, and Kingdoms, in which they live. They will be bleſſings to the Houſes and Families where they live, *Prov.*24.3. *Through wiſdom is an houſe builded, and by underſtanding it is eſtabliſhed.* Yea, they will be Bleſſings to the Towns and Cities wherein they live, *Eccleſ.*9.14,15. *There was a little City, and a few men within it; and there came a great King againſt it, and beſieged it, and built great Bulwarks againſt it; now there was found in it a poor wiſe man, and he by his wiſdom delivered the City.* By the means of a wiſe Woman the City of *Abel* was preſerved from deſtruction; When *Joab* was come againſt it with a great Army, to deſtroy the place, ſhe by her wiſe carriage both mollified *Joabs* Spirit, and brought over the men of the City to comply with his deſire, and ſo ſaved the City from ruine, 2 *Sam.*20.15,16,22. Yea, more than this, they will be Bleſſings to the States and Kingdoms in which they live; *Prov.*28.2. *For the tranſgreſſion of a Land many are the Princes thereof; but by a man of underſtanding and knowledge the ſtate thereof ſhall be prolonged.* *Joſeph* being a wiſe and diſcreet man, *Gen.*

41.38.

41.39. was a great blessing to all the Land of *Egypt*, and not to *Egypt* only, but to all the Countreys round about, who were sustained by the Provision that he had laid up against the time of that great Famine.

5. Wisdom will cause our Children to live in good repute and credit all their days: *Prov.*3.35. *The wise shall inherit Glory, but shame shall be the promotion of Fools.* Eccl.8.1. *A mans wisdom maketh his face to shine*—It will procure them favour and honour and respect from all sorts of persons, *Prov.*4.7,8. *Exalt her, and she shall promote thee, she shall bring thee to honour when thou dost embrace her; she shall give to thine head an Ornament of Grace, a Crown of Glory shall she deliver to thee*: Prov.14.35. *The Kings favour is towards a wise Servant.*

6. Wisdom will keep our Children from imbezeling away, and mis-spending their Estates which we leave them, and will help them to preserve, increase and use well that portion of Goods or Lands, that we shall bequeath to them, *Prov.*24.4. *By knowledge shall the Chambers be filled with all the precious and pleasant Riches*, Prov.21.20. *There is a treasure to be desired, and Oyl in the dwelling of the wise, but a foolish man spendeth it up.*

7. Wisdom will keep them from falling into those troubles and snares wherewith foolish and indiscreet persons are intangled, *Prov.*22.3. *A prudent man fore-seeth the evil and hideth himself, but the simple pass on and are punished.* And when they do fall into trouble, knowledge will help them to get out of their troubles, *Prov.*11.9. *Through knowledge shall the Just be delivered.*

8. Wisdom will preserve them from keeping evil company, that they shall not be intangled with the

acquaintance either of lewd men or lascivious women, which are the bane and destruction of many young men, *Prov.*2.10,11,12,16. *When wisdom entreth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant to thy Soul, Discretion shall preserve thee, and Understanding shall keep thee, to deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things,——to deliver thee from the strange Woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words.*

9. Wisdom will make our Children prove great Comforts to us, *Prov.*10.1. *A wise Son maketh a glad Father:* Prov.23.15,16. *My Son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoyce, even mine; yea, my reins shall rejoyce when thy lips speak right things:* And vers. 24,25. *The Father of the Righteous shall greatly rejoyce, and he that begetteth a wise Child shall have joy of him; thy Father and thy Mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoyce.*

10. Wisdom and Understanding are means of leading them to life and salvation: *Prov.*16.22. *Understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that hath it.* Prov.3.21,22. *Keep sound Wisdom and Discretion, so shall they be Life and Grace to thy Neck:* John 17.3. *This is Life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Do we not thirst after the salvation of our Childrens Souls? If we do, then let us be diligent to instruct them in the Scriptures, which will make them wise to salvation.

Sect.

Sect. 4.

Many Benefits accrue to our Children by Inſtruction.

4 Motive. BY training up our Children in the knowledge and obedience of the Scriptures, we ſhall greatly promote their welfare. That this is the way to furniſh them with wiſdom, and what Advantages will come to them by being endued with Wiſdom, hath been ſhewed already. There are many other great Benefits and Advantages will accrue to our Children, by being inſtructed in the Scriptures: I will inſtance in ſome of them.

1. Acquaintance with the Word of God will furniſh them with grounds of Conſolation, whereby they may be able to bear up chearfully, and comfort themſelves under all the troubles of this preſent life. We know not what troubles our Children may meet with, when we are at Reſt in our Graves; we leave them in a troubleſome world, where they muſt expect to meet with variety of afflictions, *Job* 14. 1. *Man that is born of a Woman is of few Days, and full of trouble*; eſpecially if they walk in the path that leads to life, for there is no getting to Heaven, but through much tribulation: *Act.* 14. 22. *We muſt through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God.* And if our Children have not ſomewhat out of Gods Word to comfort themſelves withall under their afflictions, they will ſink under their ſorrows, and be in danger to make away themſelves; *Pſal.* 119. 92. *Unleſs thy Law had been my delight, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine affliction.* But if they be acquainted with the word of God, they may from thence be furniſhed with grounds of Conſolation under the greateſt troubles that can come upon them in this world,

world, *Jer.*15.16. *Thy words were found and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and the rejoycing of mine heart.*— It was a time of great trouble with the Prophet, and he was alone, and had none to comfort him, as we may ſee Verſ.10, 17, 18. yet even then when he was a man of contention to the whole earth, and ſat alone, being filled with indignation, and looked upon his pain as perpetual, and his wound as incurable, Gods word was the joy and rejoycing of his heart. So *David* when his heart was ready to break with grief, *Pſal.*119.28. *My Soul melteth for heavineſs*——found joy and comfort in Gods word, Verſ.49.50. *Remember thy word unto thy Servant, upon which thou haſt cauſed me to hope. This is my comfort in mine affliction.*— And Verſ.143,162. *Trouble and anguiſh have taken hold of me, yet thy Commandments are my delight; I rejoyce at thy word, as one that findeth great ſpoyl.*

2. Acquaintance with the word of God will keep our Children from taking evil and deſtructive courſes, from going in thoſe paths that will bring them to deſtruction, *Pſal.*17.4. *Concerning the works of men by the words of thy Lips I have kept me from the paths of the deſtroyers.* The word of God laid up in their hearts, will keep them from aſſociating themſelves with evil men and evil women; It will ſo over-awe their hearts, that they will not only not run of themſelves into evil Company, but alſo ſhun and avoid them though they uſe many flattering ſpeeches to entice them to that which is evil: *Prov.*7.15. *My Son, keep my words, and lay up my Commandments with thee; That they may keep thee from the ſtrange woman, from the ſtranger which flattereth with her words:* See alſo *Prov.*6.23,24.

3. The knowledge of Godsword will keep them from

from falling into Errors, which perſons of weak Judgments and not well grounded in the Scriptures, are eaſily drawn into. Errors ariſe from ignorance of the Scriptures: *Mark* 12.24. *Do ye not therefore err, becauſe ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God.* Growing in knowledge is preſcribed by the Apoſtle as a means to prevent perſons being led into errors, 2 *Pet.*3.17,18. We had need be careful to preſerve our Children from Errors, eſpecially in Fundamental Points of Religion, as well as from groſs ſins: For, 1. Except they abide in the Doctrine of Chriſt, they can have no enjoyment of God, 2 *John* 9. *Whoſoever tranſgreſſeth, and abideth not in the Doctrine of Chriſt, hath not God; he that abideth in the Doctrine of Chriſt, he hath both the Father and the Son.* 2. Hereſies are manifeſt works of the fleſh, as well as Adultery, and Murder, and ſuch-like ſins, and will as certainly exclude men from the Kingdom of Heaven, as the groſſeſt ſins; as we may ſee *Gal.* 5.19,20,21.

4. If we inſtruct our Children in the knowledge of Gods word, that will guide and direct them how to carry on all their undertakings, and how to manage the great Turns and Changes of their Lives, and all their other affairs, *Pſal.*119.105. *Thy word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my path.* And the Lord hath promiſed to ſuch as converſe much with his word, and treaſure it up in their hearts, that his word ſhall lead and guide them in all their ways, and they ſhall have ſuch plain direction from his word, how to order their Affairs, as if they heard one talking with them, and ſaying this is the way, walk therein: *Prov.*6.21,22,23. *Bind them continually upon thine heart—When thou goeſt, it ſhall lead thee; when thou ſleepeſt, it ſhall keep thee; when thou wakeſt, it*

ſhall

ſhall talk with thee: For the Commandment is a Lamp, and the Law is Light, and Reproofs of Inſtruction are the way of life: Iſa.30.21. *Thine ears ſhall hear a word behind thee, ſaying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.*

5. It will help our Children even whilſt they are young, to reform their lives. *Pſal.*119.9. *Wherewithall ſhall a young man cleanſe his way, by taking heed thereto according to thy word.* It will keep them from ſinning againſt God: *Pſal.*119.11. *Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.* It will cauſe them to do thoſe things which are right in the ſight of God, 2 *Kings* 12.2. *And Jehoaſh did that which was right in the ſight of the Lord all his days, wherein Jehoiada the Prieſt inſtructed him.* Now who is there that feareth the Lord, that would not moſt gladly have his Children reform their lives, and be kept from ſinning againſt God, and do that which is right in the ſight of the Lord?

6. By leaving our Children inſtructed in Gods word, we ſhall leave them better than if we were able to leave them thouſands of pounds of Silver and Gold: *For the Law of thy mouth is better unto me than thouſands of Gold and Silver*, Pſal.119.72.

7. Godly Parents may have all that they can deſire on the behalf of their Children, if they do train them up in the knowledge and obedience of the Scriptures. Do we deſire that our Children ſhould be brought to know and fear the Lord? This may be effected by cauſing them to treaſure up Gods word in their hearts, *Prov.*2.1,5. *My Son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my Commandments with thee——Then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.* Would we have our Chil-

Children continue in the ways of God, walking with and ſerving God as long as they live? By inſtructing them whilſt they are young, we ſhall obtain our deſire in this thing: *Prov.* 22.6. *Train up a Child in the way that he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* Would we have our Children inſtructed how to lead a godly and righteous Life? And would we have them throughly furniſhed with abilities for every good work? This may be done by acquainting them with the Scriptures: 2 *Tim.* 3.16, 17. *All Scripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good works.* Do we deſire our Children ſhould be proſperous men, both whilſt we live, and after we are dead, and gone into another world? This may be obtained by training them up in the knowledge and obedience of Gods word, *Deut.* 29.9. *Keep therefore the words of this Covenant, and do them, that ye may proſper in all that ye do.* Do we deſire that our Children may be bleſſed with all manner of bleſſings whilſt they live here in this world, and do we deſire to have their Souls ſaved when they die? The way to obtain this, is to train them up in a godly ſort, that they may know and walk in the ways of the Lord, which he hath preſcribed to us and to them in his holy word: For 1 *Tim.* 4.8. *Godlineſs is profitable unto all things, having promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come:* Prov. 10.17. *He is in the way of life that keepeth inſtruction.* See alſo 2 *Tim.* 3.15. *John* 17.3. *Deut.* 28. from verſ. 1. to 24.

SECT.

Sect. 5.

We benefit our ſelves by inſtructing our Families.

5 *Motive.* BY inſtructing our Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures, we ſhall not only procure much good to our Children and Servants, but ſhall alſo exceedingly advantage our own Souls, and obtain many bleſſings from God, for our ſelves as well as our Families. When *Obed-Edom* entertained the Ark of the Lord in his houſe, *The Lord bleſſed Obed-Edom and all his houſhold*, 2 *Sam.* 6. 11. And the Bleſſings that God gave *Obed-Edom* were ſo remarkable, that others as well as himſelf took notice thereof, verſ. 12. *And it was told King David, ſaying, The Lord hath bleſſed the houſe of Obed-Edom, and all that pertained unto him, becauſe of the Ark of God.* In this Ark were laid up the Laws of God, written upon two Tables, *Deut.* 10. 2. If we treaſure up Gods Laws in our own hearts, and teach the ſame unto our Families, inſtructing them both in the Duties of the firſt and ſecond Table, that is, in their duty to God and to Men; the Lord will as ſurely, and in as eminent a manner bleſs us, as he did *Obed-Edom*, for receiving the Ark, wherein were the two Tables of the Law of God. I will inſtance in ſome advantages and bleſſings which thoſe Parents and Maſters of Families ſhall receive, that are diligent in training up their Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures.

1. The Lord hath promiſed a long and bleſſed Life to them and their Children, that inſtruct their Children in his word; they ſhall enjoy a kind of Heaven upon Earth, *Deut.* 11. 18, 19, 21. *Therefore ſhall ye lay up theſe my words in your hearts and in your ſoul's*

ſouls——*And ye ſhall teach them your Children, ſpeaking of them when thou ſitteſt in thine houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the way, when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up*——*that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your Children*——*as the days of Heaven upon Earth.*

2. They ſhall have a great reward in Heaven, who are diligent in inſtructing thoſe whom God hath committed to their Charge, *Mat.*24.45,46,47. *Who then is that faithful and wiſe Servant whom his Lord hath made Ruler over his houſhold to give them meat in due ſeaſon? Bleſſed is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh ſhall find ſo doing: Verily I ſay unto you, That he ſhall make him Ruler over all his Goods.* If we teach our Families the Commandments of God, and do alſo keep them our ſelves, we ſhall be great Perſons in the Kingdom of Heaven, how mean and low ſoever our condition be in this world, *Mat.*5.19. *Whoſoever ſhall break one of theſe leaſt Commandments, and ſhall teach men ſo, he ſhall be called the leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whoſoever ſhall do and teach them, the ſame ſhall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.*

3. Our Children and Servants will be great Comforts and Bleſſings to us if we train them up in the fear of God. *Oneſimus* before his Converſion was a great croſs to his Maſter, but after he was inſtructed by the Apoſtle *Paul*, and God had wrought upon him, who was a more dutiful Servant than *Oneſimus? Philem.*11. *Which in time paſt was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to me and to thee.* They will be great Comforts to us in this world: *Prov.*10.1. *A wiſe Son maketh a glad Father*: Prov. 29.17. *Correct thy Son, and he ſhall give thee reſt; yea, he ſhall give delight unto thy Soul.* The *Chaldee*, *Syriack*, *Arabick*, *Greek*,

Greek, and *Vulgar Latin*, tranſlate the word *Erudi filium tuum*, &c. *Inſtruct thy Son*; and the Hebrew word חנך ſignifies to inſtruct—as well as to correct, as *Pſal.*2.10. *Be inſtructed ye Judges of the Earth.* So that the words may be as well rendred, *Inſtruct thy Son, and he ſhall give thee reſt*; *yea, he ſhall give delight to thy Soul.* What greater Comfort can a Parent have, than to ſee his Children walking in the ways of God? 3*John* 4. *I have no greater joy than to hear that my Children walk in truth.* They will alſo be a Comfort to us in the world to come: What a Joy will it be to a godly Parent to preſent himſelf and his Children before the Lord, and to ſay, *Lord, here am I, and the Children whom thou haſt given me.* As it is with Miniſters of the Word, they ſhall have great joy in thoſe they have inſtructed and converted to the Lord, 1 *Theſ.*2.19,20. *What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoycing? Are not even ye, in the preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt at his coming? For ye are our Glory and Joy.* So it will be with Parents and Maſters of Families, they ſhall have great Joy at the day of Judgment in thoſe whom they have taught and brought home to the Lord.

4. It will keep the memory and ſavour of Gods word upon our hearts, and breed in us a ſpiritual frame of heart, to be often teaching Gods word to our *Families*, Deut.4.9,10. *Only take heed to thy ſelf, and keep thy ſoul diligently, leſt thou forget the things that thine eyes have ſeen, and leſt they depart from thine heart all the days of thy life*; *but teach them thy Sons, and thy Sons Sons*; *eſpecially the day that thou ſtoodeſt before the Lord thy God in Horeb, when the Lord ſaid unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they ſhall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their Children.*

5. It

5. It will be a great ſupport and ſatisfaction to Governours of Families, in a dying hour, if their Conſciences bear them witneſs that they have been careful to train up thoſe whom the Lord hath committed to their charge, in the knowledge of his word. It was a comfort to *Hezekiah*, when he had received the Sentence of Death, that he had done that which was good in the ſight of the Lord, *Iſa.* 38.3. Now this is a good thing in the ſight of God, to bring men to the knowledge of the Truth, 1*Tim.* 2.3,4. When the Lord Jeſus was departing out of this world, he mentions twice his giving Gods word to the men that were given to him, *John* 17,8,14. Poſſibly for this reaſon, to teach us that it will be a great comfort in a dying hour to all ſuch as have had any perſons committed to their charge, to be able to appeal to God that they have taught and inſtructed them in the knowledge of his holy word. When the Apoſtle *Paul* took his leave of the Church of *Epheſus*, and knew he ſhould ſee their faces no more, though he knew that after his departing grievous Wolves would enter in among them, not ſparing the Flock, and alſo that among themſelves ſome would ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, yet having before been diligent in teaching them the good word of God, he doth with a great deal of ſatisfaction of mind commend them to God, and to his word, knowing that Gods word was able to build them up under all oppoſitions and diſcouragements whatever, *Acts* 20.32. *And now Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are ſanctified.* In like manner, when Parents have taught their Children the word of God, although they fore-ſee that after their death their Children are

likely to fall into many temptations by reason of seducing spirits, or other evils, yet they may with much comfort commend them to God, and to the word of his grace, wherein they have been instructed.

6. Such Parents as are careful to instruct their Families, and to train them up in the knowledge and fear of God, shall not only be blessed themselves, but they shall be great blessings unto others, *Gen.* 18. 18,19. *Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him:* And why? The Reason is rendred in the following words, *For I know him, that he will command his Children and his Houshold after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*

Sect. 6.

The Evils that arise from the neglect of Family-Instruction.

6 Motive. Consider what a great evil it is for Governours of Families to neglect instructing their Families in the knowledge of Gods holy Word.

1. They do shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against their Children and Servants. For such as do take away the Key of Knowledge, do shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against those persons from whom they do take away the Key of Knowledge; as is evident by comparing *Mat.* 23. 13. *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees Hypocrites, for ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men: for ye neither go in your selves, neither suffer ye them that are entring to go in:* with

with *Luk.*11.52. *Wo unto you Lawyers, for ye have taken away the Key of Knowledge; ye entred not in your ſelves, and them that were entring in ye hindred.* What a woful crime is this, for a man to ſhut up the Kingdom of Heaven againſt his Family?

2. Such Parents as neglect to inſtruct their children are more cruel than the Sea-monſters, *Lam.* 4. 3. *Even the Sea-monſters draw out the breſt to their young ones. The daughter of my People is become cruel as the Oſtrich in the Wilderneſs.* Inſtruction is as neceſſary for the Soul, as the breſt or other food is for the Body. Yea, they are worſe than Infidels, 1 *Tim.* 5.8. *If any provide not for his own, and ſpecially for thoſe of his own Houſe, he hath denied the Faith, and is worſe than an Infidel.* The providing thoſe things which concern the Souls of our Houſhold is as neceſſary, and the neglect thereof as dangerous, as the providing for their Bodies. Yea, they are more unnatural than the damned in Hell, for they are deſirous that their Relations ſhould be inſtructed, and that means ſhould be uſed to prevent their eternal damnation, *Luk.*16.23,27,28. *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and ſeeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his boſom—Then he ſaid, I pray thee therefore that thou wouldſt ſend him to my Fathers houſe, for I have five brethren, that he may teſtifie unto them, leſt they alſo come into this place of torment.*

3. God accounts thoſe Parents haters of their Children, that neglect to inſtruct and correct them, *Prov.*13.24. *He that ſpareth the Rod, hateth his Son; but he that loveth him chaſteneth him betimes.* Such as do not endeavour to prevent ſin in their neighbours, do hate them in their hearts, whatever ſhew of love they make in their words, *Lev.*19.17. *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thine heart, thou ſhalt in any wiſe re-*

buke thy Neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him. If they hate their Neighbours that ſuffer ſin upon them, do not they hate their Children that ſuffer them to live in ignorance of God, which is a Soul-damning ſin?

4. Children and Servants prove great croſſes when they are not trained up in the knowledge and fear of God. And this comes to paſs both by the juſt Judgment of God, who puniſheth Parents and Maſters neglect of Family-Inſtruction, with the diſobedient undutiful carriage of their Children and Servants; and alſo from the power of original corruption, which when it is not reſtrained by good education, breaks forth with great violence, and cauſeth perſons to be of a perverſe and ſtubborn ſpirit. *Eli* neglecting Family-Government was puniſhed in his Children, by their proving exceeding great croſſes to him, 1 *Sam.*2.33. *The man of thine whom I ſhall not cut off from mine Altar, ſhall be to conſume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart.* And as God dealt with *Eli*, ſo he ordinarily deals with thoſe Parents that neglect to train up their Children in the knowledge and fear of his Name; he ſuffers them to prove a reproach and grief to their Parents, *Prov.* 29.15. *The Rod and Reproof give wiſdom, but a Child left to himſelf bringeth his Mother to ſhame.* Prov.17 25. *A fooliſh Son is a grief to his Father, and bitterneſs to her that bare him.*

5. The neglect of inſtructing our Families, and training them up in the fear of God, cauſeth God to inflict many great and ſore judgments on our Families, and ſuch as ſhall continue upon them from Generation to Generation: 1 *Sam.*3.13,14. *I have told him that I will judge his houſe for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth, becauſe his Sons made themſelves*

ſelves vile, and he reſtrained them not; and therefore I have ſworn unto the Houſe of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's Houſe ſhall not be purged with Sacrifice nor Offering for ever.

Sect. 7.

Family-Inſtruction will propagate Religion to a thouſand Generations.

7 Motive. BY inſtructing our Children and Servants in the knowledge of the Scriptures, and training them up in the fear of God, we ſhall be a means of erecting many godly Families, and ſhall greatly propagate the true Religion and Power of Godlineſs, and ſhall prove great Bleſſings not only to the preſent Generation, but alſo to the Generations that are to come. For if we inſtruct our Children, and the Lord bleſs our Labours (and we have no cauſe to doubt of his Bleſſing, if we be diligent and faithful in our work) our Children will teach their Children, and their Children will teach the next Generation; and ſo by our means the knowledge of God and his Goſpel will be tranſmitted from Generation to Generation, as long as the world ſtands: For Children are very apt to walk in all thoſe ways that they ſee their Fathers walk in, 1 *King.* 22.43. *And he walked in all the ways of Aſa his Father; he turned not aſide from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the Lord.* *Solomon* gives this reaſon why he taught his Children, his Father taught him when he was a Child, *Prov.* 4. 1,3,4. *Hear ye Children the inſtruction of a Father, and attend to know underſtanding, for I was my Fathers Son, tender and only beloved in the ſight of my Mother; He taught me alſo, and ſaid, Let thy heart retain my words, keep*

my Commandments and live. That if we teach Gods Word unto our Children, they will teach it to their Children, and their Children will teach the next Generation, and ſo the knowledge of God and his holy Word, will be tranſmitted from one Generation to another, is implyed in *Pſal.* 78. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark ſayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our Fathers have told us, we will not hide them from their Children, ſhewing to the Generation to come the praiſes of the Lord, and his ſtrength, and his wonderful works that he hath done: For he eſtabliſhed a Teſtimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Iſrael, which he commanded our Fathers that they ſhould make them known unto their Children, that the Generation to come might know them, even the Children which ſhould be born, who ſhould ariſe and declare unto their Children, that they might ſet their hope in God, &c.* And as our Children, ſo alſo our Servants whom we have inſtructed, when God ſhall give them Families, they will teach their Houſholds the ways of the Lord, and ſuch as ſpring out of their Loyns will tread in their ſteps, and inſtruct their Families, whereby the Kingdom of Chriſt will be greatly inlarged. *Solomon* inſtructed his Servants, 1 *Kings* 10. 8. *Happy are thy men, happy are theſe thy Servants, which ſtand continually before thee, and hear thy wiſdom.* And we find the Children of *Solomons* Servants, who were generally reputed to be Proſelites, that had embraced the Jewiſh Religion, ſpoken of in the Scriptures, and giving evidence of their Piety for many Generations after *Solomon's* death, they evidenced their Piety by adhering to the Jews, who were the People and Church of the living God, and that when they were in a low condition, and under great miſery by reaſon of the *Babyloniſh* Captivity.

3. By

2. By their returning out of *Babylon* to *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, *Ezra* 2.1,55. after they had dwelt in *Babylon* ſeventy years, where they had built Houſes and planted Vineyards, *Jer.*29.4,5. and could not leave thoſe Houſes and Vineyards without much loſs. 3. The Children of *Solomon*'s Servants are reckoned up amongſt thoſe that were moſt forward to come out of *Babylon* unto *Zion*, *Neh.*7.5,6,57. 4. They went out of *Babylon* to *Jeruſalem*, to build the Houſe of the Lord, which was a great, coſtly, and difficult work, *Ezra* 1.3,5. compared with Chap. 2.1,55. and that is a further evidence of their Piety, that they went not up to *Jeruſalem* for their own ends, but that the Lord had ſtirred up their ſpirits to go thither to build the Lords Houſe. This example ſheweth that Inſtruction is a means to propagate Religion to many Generations; for from *Solomon* to the carrying away of the Jews into *Babylon*, were thirteen Generations, *Mat.* 1.17. and from their going into *Babylon*, till their return from thence, ſeventy years, *Jer.*29,10. And we find the Children of *Solomons* Servants retaining a ſavour of true Piety, from *Solomon*'s days till their return from *Babylon*. By the means of Family-Inſtruction rightly managed, what is promiſed *Iſa.*60.22. *A little one ſhall become a thouſand*, may be verified of our Families; Religion may be ſo propagated by training up our Famiiies in the knowledge and fear of God, that from one little Family that feareth God, may in proceſs of time ariſe a thouſand godly Families. And what is ſaid of *Iſrael*, Iſa. 27. 6. *Iſrael ſhall bloſſom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit*: The like may be ſaid of thoſe godly perſons that train up their Families in the fear of God, they ſhall do much towards the filling of the face of the

world with the fruits of Righteouſneſs. Religion will be ſo propagated from one Family to another, and from one Generation to another, by the means of Family-Inſtruction, that hereby may be fulfilled what is ſpoken of, *Iſa.* 58.12. *They that ſhall be of thee ſhall build the old waſte places, thou ſhalt raiſe up the foundations of many Generations; and thou ſhalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, and the Reſtorer of Paths to dwell in.* And hereby we may become an Eternal Excellency, the Joy of many Generations; and many Children that are yet unborn ſhall riſe up, and call us Bleſſed, and will have cauſe to bleſs God on our behalf to all Eternity. It is ſaid of *Abraham*, who inſtructed his Family, *All the Nations of the Earth ſhall be bleſſed in him*, Now he became a Bleſſing to all Nations, not only upon the account that the *Meſſiah* came out of his Loyns, (of which the *Holy Ghoſt* ſpeaks *Gen.*22.18. where he attributes the Bleſſing of all Nations not to *Abraham*, but to his Seed; *In thy Seed ſhall all the Nations of the Earth be bleſſed*) but his being a Bleſſing to all Nations, is alſo attributed to his inſtructing his Family, and training up his Children and Servants in a godly ſort, whereby the knowledge of God and the Seeds of Piety and true Religion were conveyed from one Family to another, and from one Generation to another, and from one Nation to another; as will appear from *Gen.*18. 18,19. *All the Nations of the Earth ſhall be bleſſed in him*: (How ſo? How ſhould it come about that all Nations ſhould be bleſſed in him? The following words will declare this) *For I know him, that he will command his Children and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord to do Juſtice and Judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath ſpoken of him.*

Lo

Lo here how effectually Family-Inſtruction propagates Religion! By means whereof, from one Family the Seeds of Piety are conveyed to many Nations.

Sect. 8.

Family-Inſtruction greatly advanceth Gods glory.

8 *Motive.* INſtructing our Families in the knowledge of Gods holy word, will very much advance the Glory of God. For then we glorifie God, when we manifeſt and make known his Name unto thoſe perſons whom he hath committed to our charge, and are careful to bring them acquainted with his word: *John* 17.4. *I have glorified thee on Earth:* And how did Chriſt glorifie his Father upon the earth? He tells us, Verſ. 6. & 8. That it was by manifeſting the Name of God to thoſe that were given to him by his Father, and by inſtructing them out of his word; *I have manifeſted thy Name unto the men whom thou gaveſt me out of the world——I have given unto them the words which thou gaveſt me.* When *David* was deſirous to exalt and magnifie the Name of the Lord, the way that he reſolved to take for the exalting and glorifying God, was to teach his Children to fear the Lord, *Pſal.* 34.3, 11. *O magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his Name together. Come ye Children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* Family-Inſtruction advanceth the glory of God ſeveral ways; I will mention only two or three.

1. Inſtructing our Children and Servants out of the word of God, will be a means to bring them to lead holy, godly, and righteous Lives; and when our Families walk in the fear of God, and live righteouſly,

teouſly, God is glorified, *Iſa.*60.21. *Thy People alſo ſhall be all righteous——that I may be glorified.*

2. The good that our Children and Servants will receive by our inſtructing them out of the word of God, will be ſo great, that they will bleſs and praiſe God for it, as long as they live, yea to all eternity, ſo that hereby we ſhall bring eternal glory to God, for then and as long as God is praiſed he is glorified, *Pſal.* 50. 23. *Whoſo offereth me praiſe, glorifieth me.*

3. Family-Inſtruction glorifieth God, as it is a means to propagate Religion, and increaſe the number of Converts, and to bring multitudes to become Servants of the Lord; for the more godly Families are erected, the more the number of Gods Servants is multiplied, the more God is glorified, *Prov.* 14.28. *In the multitude of People is the Kings Honour.* What *Solomon* ſaith of earthly Kings, the ſame is true of the King of Heaven. The Prophet *Iſaiah* alſo informeth us, *Iſa.*26.15. That the increaſing of the number of Gods Servants, advanceth his glory: *Thou haſt increaſed the Nation, O Lord, thou haſt increaſed the Nation; thou art glorified.* And it hath been ſhewn before, that inſtructing our Families will be an effectual means of their Converſion, and will greatly propagate Religion, and the Power of Godlineſs from one Family to another, for many Generations. Now ſeeing Family-Inſtruction glorifieth God, we ſhould ſet our Heads and Hearts on work how to carry on this duty in the moſt advantagious and ſucceſsful manner; for we were every one created, and are maintained in our being for this very end, to glorifie God, *Iſa.* 43. 6, 7. *Bring my Sons from far, and my Daughters from the end of the earth, even every one that is called by my name, for I have*

have created him for my glory: And Verſ. 21. *This people have I formed for my ſelf; they ſhall ſhew forth my praiſe.* And ſeeing we had our Beings given us for this end, to glorifie God, we ought to attend thoſe Services which glorifie God with all our might.

And as the training up of our Children in the knowledge and fear of God, greatly advanceth his glory; ſo the neglect of this duty may be ſaid to rob God of eternal glory. Hence God complains of ſuch as neglect or hinder the Religious Education of Children, that they take away his glory for ever, *Mich.* 2. 9. *From their Children they have taken away my glory for ever:* How did they take away from their Children the glory of God for ever? *Locceius* gives this interpretation of it, *malâ educatione*; By their evil education of their Children they robbed God of eternal glory. To the ſame effect *Gualther* expounds the words, *Inſtitutione deſtituuntur, quâ ad Dei gloriam educentur*; They were deprived of inſtruction, whereby they ſhould have been trained up to the glory of God. *Corn. à Lapid.* alſo gives the ſame ſence of the words, *Tuliſtis ab eis meam laudem, tum quia eos à matribus avulſos, honeſtâ piâq; educatione privaſtis, & in idololatriâ veſtra educaſtis tam quia eos ad paupertatem adegiſtis ob quam ad omnia ſcelera veſtramq; voluntatem & libidinem inflexiſtis. Winckelman,* D. *Stokes,* and ſeveral others, expound this Scripture of the depriving Children of Religious Education. And they that neglect the educating their Children in a pious manner, may well be ſaid to take away from their Children the glory of God for ever: For when Children are trained up in a godly ſort, they will glorifie God all their days in this world, and alſo in heaven to all eternity; and they

they would not only glorifie God themſelves, but teach their Children to do ſo alſo; and they would teach the next Generation; and ſo the knowledge and glory of God might be tranſmitted from one Generation to another, as long as the world ſhall continue; all which glory is taken away from God, where the pious Education of Children is neglected.

Sect. 9.

We ſhew our love to God by Inſtructing our Families.

9 *Motive.* THe Lord will take it kindly at our hands, and account it a real demonſtration of our love towards His Sacred Majeſty, if we are careful to feed our Families with the knowledge of his word: Three times the Lord Jeſus calls upon the Apoſtle *Peter*, that if he had any love to him, he would ſhew it by feeding his Lambs and his Sheep, *John* 21.15,16,17. *Jeſus ſaith unto Simon Peter, Simon Son of Jonas loveſt thou me more than theſe? He ſaith unto him, Yea Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee: He ſaith unto him, Feed my Lambs. He ſaith to him again the ſecond time, Loveſt thou me? He ſaith unto him, Yea Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee: He ſaith unto him, Feed my Sheep. He ſaith unto him the third time, Loveſt thou me? —And he ſaid unto him, Lord thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I love thee: Jeſus ſaith unto him, Feed my Sheep.* After the Command of loving God with all our heart, and all our ſoul, and all our might, is immedialely added the Command of laying up Gods Word in our hearts, and teaching the ſame diligently unto our Children, *Deut.*6.5,6,7. which implieth, That we

cann't

cann't expreſs our love to God better, than by lodging his word in our hearts, and teaching it to our Children. As they are Paſtors after Gods own heart, who are diligent to inſtruct the people in the knowledge of his word, *Jer.*3.15. *I will give you Paſtors according to mine heart, which ſhall feed you with knowledge and underſtanding:* So they are Parents and Maſters after Gods own heart, who feed their Children and Servants with the knowledge of Gods word. It is ſaid of *Hezekiah*, 2*Chron.*30.22. *Hezekiah ſpake comfortably to all the Levites; that taught the good knowledge of the Lord.* In the like manner at the day of Judgment the Lord will ſpeak comfortably to all thoſe Maſters of Families that have taught his good word unto their Families.

Sect. 10.

Gods mercy in giving us Families, ſhould ſtir us up to inſtruct them.

10 *Motive.* IT is a great mercy to have a Family. The giving the Midwives an Houſhold, is mentioned as a great part of the Reward which God gave them for their fearing His Sacred Majeſty, *Exod.*1.21. *And it be came to paſs becauſe the Midwives feared God, he made them Houſes.* All the Members of a Family are Bleſſings and great Mercies, when they are well-ordered, and rightly improved. It is a great Bleſſing to have a good Wife, *Prov.*18.22. *Whoſo findeth a Wife, findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord.* Children alſo are accounted by God to be a Bleſſing, and are given as a Reward: *Pſal.*127.3,5. *Lo Children are the Heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his Reward. Happy is the man that hath his Quiver*

full

full of them. It is no ſmall Bleſſing to have Servants, and that we are not put to do all toylſome and inferiour works our ſelves, and that we are not left alone to carry on our Affairs, but have Servants to be helpful to us. When *Abraham*'s Servant reckons up the Bleſſings which God had given his Maſter, he mentions among the reſt, Gods giving him Servants, *Gen.*24.35. *The Lord hath bleſſed my Maſter greatly, and he hath given him —— Men-Servants and Maid-Servants.*— *Solomon* alſo ſpeaketh of it as a mercy to have a Servant, *Prov.*12.9. *He that is deſpiſed, and hath a Servant, is better than he that honoureth himſelf, and lacketh Bread.* Now if a Family, and every Member in a Family be a mercy, and a bleſſing given us by God, it is but meet that we ſhould in way of gratitude dedicate our Families to God, and train up every Member in the Family in the knowledge and fear of God. Eſpecially if we conſider that our Children and Servants are committed to us for this very end, that we ſhould train them up in a godly ſort, that will lay a further obligation upon us to bring them acquainted with God, by inſtructing them out of his holy word: *Mal.* 2. 15. *Did he not make one? Yet had he the reſidue of the Spirit: And wherefore one? That he might ſeek a godly Seed.* The Prophet acquaints us in theſe words what was Gods end in the Inſtitution of Marriage, which was not ſimply the giving of a Seed, or the propagating of Mankind, but the producing of a Godly Seed, and to that end he ordained Marriage to be between one man and one woman; whereas when he created *Adam* he could have formed many women for the uſe of one man, ſeeing he had the reſidue of the Spirit; but he made only one woman, to the intent that Man and Wife might joyn in their care and endea-

endeavour to train up their Seed in a godly sort, which would be much hindred by multiplying of Wives, whereby a mans heart would have been turned away from discharging his duty to God and his Family, *Deut.* 17.17.

Sect II.

We have the example of Jesus Christ, *and the best men that ever lived, for instructing their Families.*

11 *Motive.* IT hath been the practice of the Saints and Servants of God in all Ages and Generations to instruct and train up their Families in the knowledge and fear of the Lord: And the labour and pains they have taken in this Good Work, hath not gone without a Reward, for both they themselves and their Families have been exceedingly blessed of the Lord: Among the many examples that might be produced both out of the old and new Testament, I will mention four or five. It was the practise of *Abraham* to instruct his Family, and train them up in the ways of God: And what high Commendations doth the Scripture give of *Abraham?* He is called, *The Friend of God, The Father of the Faithful*, &c. How did God bless *Abraham!* He appeared often to him, and gave him many precious Promises, and entred into a Covenant with him, and sent *Angels* to his House, and revealed his Secrets to him, and vouchsafed to talk familiarly with him, yea he blessed him in all things, and with all manner of blessings, *Gen.* 24.1. *Abraham was old and well stricken in age, and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things.* And that God in blessing *Abraham* had respect to his teaching his Family, is evident

evident from *Gen.*18.17,18. *And the Lord ſaid, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do, ſeeing that Abraham ſhall ſurely become a great and mighty Nation, and all the Nations of the earth ſhall be bleſſed in him? For I know him, that he will command his Children and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord, to do Juſtice and Judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath ſpoken of him.* The reaſon given in this Text why the Lord revealed his Secrets to *Abraham*, and why he became a great and mighty Nation, and why he became ſuch a great bleſſing to the world, that in him all the Nations of the Earth were bleſſed, and why he enjoyed all promiſed mercies, is fixed upon his care in training up his Houſhold in the ways of God; *For I know him, that he will command his Children and his Houſhold after him*, &c. If we would be accounted *Abraham's* Children, and enjoy *Abrahams* Bleſſing, we muſt walk in the ſteps of his Faith, *Gal.*3.7. and do his Works, *John* 8.39.

Joſhua follows *Abraham's* example, in that he did not only ſerve God himſelf, but cauſed all his Houſhold to ſerve the Lord, *Joſh* 24.15. *As for me and my Houſe, we will ſerve the Lord.* And obſerve how the Lord bleſſed *Joſhua*, who trained up his Family to ſerve the Lord: God gave him his preſence whether ſoever he went, *Joſh.*1.9. and ſtuck to him all the days of his Life, verſ.5. and honoured and magnified him in the ſight of all *Iſrael*, *Joſh.*3.7. He made him Leader of his people, to carry them into the Land of *Canaan*; He ſubdued mighty Kings under him, and gave their Kingdoms into his hand: At *Joſhua's* Requeſt the Sun ſtood ſtill a whole day, which thing God never did for any man but *Joſhua*, *Joſh.*10.12,13,14.

David

David, who hath the character of a man after Gods own heart, he was alſo careful to inſtruct his Children in the knowledge of God, and to bring them up in the fear of God; eſpecially his Son *Solomon*, 1 Chron.28.9. *And thou Solomon my Son, know thou the God of thy Father, and love him with a perfect heart and willing mind.*—Prov.4.3,4. *I was my Fathers Son, tender and only beloved in the ſight of my Mother; He taught me alſo, and ſaid unto me, Let thine heart retain my words.*——And God did exceedingly bleſs both *David* and *Solomon* his Son; the Bleſſings he gave them were ſo remarkable, that it is needleſs to recount them.

Cornelius, who was a devout man himſelf, trained up all his Houſhold in the fear of God, *Act.*10.1, 2. *There was a certain man in Ceſarea called Cornelius*——*A devout man, and one that feared God, with all his Houſe*——This man was in great favour with God, God ſent an Angel to him to tell him his Prayers and his Alms were come up for a Memorial before God, Verſ.4. and ſent *Peter* to preach the Goſpel to him, and poured out the Holy Ghoſt on him and all that were preſent with him, to the aſtoniſhing of the Jews that came along with *Peter*, Verſ.44, 45.

Timothy was inſtructed in the Scriptures while he was a Child, 2 *Tim.* 3.15. *From a Child thou haſt known the holy Scriptures*——And what an eminent man did he prove? He was ſo eminent for Faith, that the calling to mind of his Faith filled the Apoſtle with Joy, 2 *Tim.*1.4,5. He proved to be of ſuch a publick ſpirit, and ſuch a Lover of the Church of God, that of all the Apoſtles Acquaintance and Companions, there was none like unto *Timothy*, *Phil.* 2.19,20,22. The Apoſtle doth not only call

him a godly man, but a man of God, 1 *Tim.* 6. 11. *Thou, O man of God*——Examples have a great influence upon most men, if we see a multitude going before us, we are apt to follow them, though that which they do be an evil thing, and that also notwithstanding we have a Precept from God to the contrary, *Exod.* 23. 2. *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil, neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many, to wrest Judgment.* Behold here is a Cloud of Witnesses, a multitude of Gods Saints and Servants have gone before us in this good work of instructing their Families in the knowledge of Gods word, and shall we be loth to follow a multitude of good men, the best and wisest men that ever lived, in a good work, whenas we are commanded to walk in the way of good men, *Prov.* 2. 20. *Heb.* 13. 7. If the examples of the Friends and Favourites of God, of great men, of wise men, of holy men, of men that have enjoyed the Blessing and Presence of God, will do any thing with us, then let the Example of *Abraham*, *Joshua*, *David*, &c. prevail with us to train up our Families in the knowledge and fear of God.

Besides these fore-mentioned Examples, we have the Patern and Example of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, who is greater than *Abraham*, or *David*, or any Princes or Potentates that ever lived upon the face of the Earth. The Apostles and Disciples of Christ, that went whithersoever he went, that lodged where he lodged, that eat and drank with him continually, were as I may so call them Christs Family, they called him by the name of Master, and he owned that name, *John* 13. 13. *Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am:* He went in and out amongst them all the time

time after he had called them to follow him, as a Maſter doth amongſt his Servants, *Act.* 1.21. Now if we look upon the Diſciples of Chriſt as his Family, then we have an excellent Pattern of Family-Inſtruction in the Example of our Lord Jeſus: For he was very diligent in teaching and inſtructing his Diſciples, *John* 17.6. *I have manifeſted thy Name unto the men which thou gaveſt me out of the World.* And that Chriſt inſtructed them out of the word of God, appears from verſ. 14. *I have given them thy word.* See alſo *Luke* 4. from verſ. 17. to 21. He did not only teach them with others in the exerciſe of his Miniſtry, but did alſo inſtruct them in private, when they were alone with him: *Mark* 4.34. *When they were alone, he expounded all things to his Diſciples.* And not only before his death, but alſo after his Reſurrection, his great work among his Diſciples was, to teach and expound to them the Scriptures, *Luk.* 24.27. *And beginning at Moſes, and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himſelf?* And verſ. 32. *Did not our Hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?* And verſ. 45, 46. *Then opened he their underſtanding, that they might underſtand the Scriptures, and ſaid unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer,* &c. Now every one that profeſſeth himſelf to be a Chriſtian, ought to imitate the example of Chriſt, ſo far as he is placed in the ſame relation that Chriſt was in, 1 *John* 2.6. *He that ſaith he abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo to walk even as he walked.*

Sect. 12.

Gods Judgments that have lately been upon us, call for Family-Inſtruction, and Family-Reformation.

12 *Motive.* THe great and mighty Judgments that have of late been upon this Nation, as the Sword, Peſtilence, *&c.* do call aloud upon us to ſet upon this work of Family-Inſtruction, and that on ſeveral accounts.

1. The great and mighty Judgments of God call for Reformation of our Lives, and learning of Righteouſneſs, *Iſa.*26.9. *When thy Judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteouſneſs.* Now Family-Inſtruction is the way to Family-Reformation: When *Ephraim* was inſtructed he repented, and bemoaned his ſins, and turned to the Lord, *Jer.*31.18,19. And Family-Reformation would produce National Reformation: For if every Family did begin to reform and turn to the Lord, how ſpeedily would the Nation be reformed? Family-Reformation will draw down a multitude of Bleſſings both upon our ſelves and Families, and upon the whole Nation; It will bring a bleſſing upon our Eſtates, *Job* 22.23,24. *If thou return to the Almighty, thou ſhalt be built up; thou ſhalt put away iniquity far from thy Tabernacles: Then ſhalt thou lay up Gold as Duſt, and the Gold of Ophir as the ſtones of the Brooks.* *Job*'s Family was broken, and his Eſtate all gone, yet *Eliphaz* tells him if he did return himſelf to God, and put away iniquity from his *Tabernacles*, he ſhould be built up, and have plenty of Silver. It engageth God to become our defence, verſ.25. *Yea, the Almighty ſhall be thy defence, and thou ſhalt have plenty of Silver.* It breeds delight in God

God, and boldneſs in prayer, verſ. 26. *For then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and ſhalt lift up thy face unto God.* It cauſeth us to be ſucceſsful in prayer, verſ. 27. *Thou ſhalt make thy prayer unto him, and he ſhall hear thee, and thou ſhalt pay thy Vows.* It makes a man proſperous in his ways, and fills him with Comfort, verſ. 28. *Thou ſhalt alſo decree a thing, and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed unto thee; and the Light ſhall ſhine upon thy ways.* It will cauſe God to ſhelter us and our Families in time of common calamity, verſ. 29. *When men are caſt down, then thou ſhalt ſay, There is lifting up; and he ſhall ſave the humble perſon.* Lo thus ſhall the man and his Family be bleſſed, that returns to the Lord, and puts away iniquity far from his Tabernacles! And therefore ſeeing Family-Inſtruction will produce Family-Reformation, as is intimated Verſ. 22. compared with Verſ. 23. how ſhould this ſtir us up to inſtruct our Families in the word of God. Beſides theſe Perſonal and Family-Advantages, Family-Reformation would remove National Judgments, and procure National Mercies, verſ. 30. *He ſhall deliver the Iſland of the Innocent, and it is delivered by the pureneſs of thy hands*: This, as well as the foregoing Verſes, hath relation to verſ. 23. to the man that returns to God, and puts away iniquity from his *Tabernacles*. In that day wherein the *Families* of *Jeruſalem* ſhould go apart, and mourn for their ſins, in the ſame day the Lord promiſeth great mercies, both *ſpiritual* and *temporal*, not only to thoſe *Families*, but to *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, Zach. 12.

2. The late *Peſtilence* made ſore breaches in many *Families*; it hath cut off in ſome *Families* the Root, in others the Branches, in others both Root and Branches: Many Children are become father-

leſs, and Orphans, and have no Parents to teach them. It hath made many Parents childleſs, and they have now no Children to teach; it hath ſwept away many whole Families. And ſhall not we whoſe Families were preſerved untouched, or but gently viſited, ply this work of Family-Inſtruction? It was one great end why God ſpared us and our Families, that we ſhould train them up in the knowledge of his word, *Iſa.*38.13,19. *The Grave cannot praiſe thee, Death cannot celebrate thee——The Living, the Living, he ſhall praiſe thee, as I do this day; the Father to the Children ſhall make known thy truth.* From which words we may obſerve theſe two things: 1. That one great end why God gives us Children, and why he continueth our Lives with our Children, and our Children with us, is, That we ſhould teach them his word; and to this agrees that note which *Calvin* hath upon this Text, *Hinc colligenda eſt utilis monitio hac lege ſobolem dari mortalibus ut quiſque liberos ſuos erudiendo pro ſua virili propagare ad poſteros ſtudeat Dei nomen.* 2. When Parents have eſcaped with their Lives from the Peſtilence, or any other eminent danger, they ſhould expreſs their gratitude to God, by teaching his Truth to their Children. This was *Hezekiah's* caſe, he had been ſick unto death, and his ſickneſs was (as many think) the Peſtilence, but he was preſerved from death, hereupon he praiſeth God, and tells us all living perſons that had eſcaped the Peſtilence ſhould do the like; and they ſhould not only praiſe God in words, but every Father ſhould expreſs his gratitude to God for preſerving him and his from going down to the Grave, by teaching Gods word to his Children.

Sect. 13.

The Usefulness and Excellency of the Scriptures should excite us to instruct our Families in the Knowledge of the Scriptures.

13 *Motive.* THe Usefulness and Suitableness of the Scriptures for carrying on the work of Family-Instruction, may stir us up to train up our Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures. Whatsoever good thing we desire to teach our Families in order to their welfare in this world, or their eternal salvation in the world to come, it is contained in the Scriptures. Would we train up our Families in the knowledge of the Principles of Religion? The Scripture is profitable for Doctrine. Would we at any time reprove them for their sins, or teach them how to reprove others? The Scripture is profitable for Reproof. Would we correct and reform any Errors in Judgment, or in their Conversations? The Word of God is profitable for Correction. Would we teach and instruct them how to live righteous and holy Lives? The Scripture is profitable for instruction in Righteousness, as the Apostle testifies, 2 *Tim.*3. 16. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for instruction in Righteousness.* The Scriptures are so framed by the infinite wisdom of God, that they give directions for the doing of all good works, for the avoiding of all Vices, for the resisting of all Temptations, the bearing of all Afflictions, the instructing all persons of all ages, whatever state or condition they are in. Are our Children young? In the word of God there is milk for Babes, 1 *Pet.*2.2. *As new born*

Babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: Are they come to some maturity, both in respect of their years and their knowledge? In the word of God there is meat for strong men, *Heb.* 5.14. Are the Members of our Families dull and backward, and sluggish in respect of that which is good? Gods word is like a goad to prick and put them forward. Are they fickle and inconstant in that which is good? Gods word prudently and wisely applied, will be like a Nail to fasten and make them stedfast in every good work: *Eccl.* 12.11. *The words of the wise are as Goads, and as Nails fastened by the Masters of the Assemblies, which are given from one Shepherd.* Are our Children or Servants in an unconverted condition? Gods word will be a means to convert them: *Psal.* 19.7. *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul.* Are they already converted? The word of the Lord will build them up: *Act.* 20.32. *I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up.* Are they hard-hearted? Gods word will melt and break the most rocky heart upon the face of the earth: *Jer.* 23.29. *Is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces.* Are they in a broken afflicted frame? Gods word will heal them: *Psal.* 107.20. *He sent his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction.* Are they of a sorrowful spirit? The word of God will fill them with Joy: *Psal.* 19.8. *The Statutes of the Lord are right, rejoycing the heart.* Are they ignorant? The word of God will inlighten them: *Psal.* 19.8. *The Commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightning the eyes.* In a word, whatever is needful and profitable either for our selves or for our Children to be acquainted withal, it is revealed in the Scriptures,

tures: *Act.* 20. 20. *I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you.* Neither we nor our Children need the knowledge of any thing more than the whole Counſel of God concerning our Salvation, and this is fully revealed in the word of God, *Act.* 20. 27. *I have not ſhunned to declare unto you all the counſel of God.* Whatſoever Chriſt heard of the Father, that he taught his Apoſtles, *John* 15. 15. *All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.* And all things that Chriſt taught the Apoſtles, they are written in the Scriptures: *Acts* 1. 1, 2. *The former Treatiſe have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jeſus began both to do and teach until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the holy Ghoſt had given Commandments unto the Apoſtles whom he had choſen.* And therefore the Scriptures are a perfect Rule of Righteouſneſs, containing all things that are neceſſary for any man to know, believe or practiſe, in order to his eternal ſalvation. And as the Scriptures are profitable for inſtruction, in reſpect of the uſefulneſs and ſuitableneſs of the matter contained in them; ſo alſo in regard of the power that is in them, to convince the Judgment, and to prevail with the Conſcience; and to bow and bend the will to a compliance with Gods will: For they carry the Authority of God with them, and work efficaciouſly upon the ſtouteſt hearts, when God accompanies them with his Spirit: *Act.* 18. 28. *He mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, ſhewing by the Scriptures that Jeſus was Chriſt*: The Jews were exceedingly prejudiced againſt Chriſt, they were ſo far from believing that Jeſus was the Chriſt, that they had crucified him as an Impoſtor, and a Deceiver of the People; yet *Apollos* bringing clear Scripture-proof for what he taught, the Jews were here-

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by mightily convinced that Jeſus was the Chriſt. The *word of God* is of a more piercing nature than a *ſword*, and carrieth greater power along with it: *Heb.*4.12. *The Word of God is quick and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joynts and Marrow; and is a Diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* It aſtoniſheth the minds of men, and carries out their Souls to believe in and obey the Lord, notwithſtanding all Oppoſitions and Diſcouragements that lie in the way either of Faith or Obedience. *Elimas* the Sorcerer was full of ſubtilty and miſchief, and he oppoſed all he could the word of God, which was diſpenced by *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and ſought to turn away *Sergius Paulus* from the Faith, but the Word of God had ſuch power upon the Deputy, that notwithſtanding all the endeavours of *Elimas*, he became obedient to the Faith, *Acts* 13.12. *The Deputy when he ſaw what was done believed, being aſtoniſhed at the Doctrine of the Lord.* Of all the Jews none were more oppoſite to believing in Chriſt, than the Prieſts; for the Prieſts plotted and contrived Chriſts death, *Matt.*26.3,4. They ſent *Judas* and a multitude of People with him to apprehend Chriſt, verſ.47. They ſuborned falſe witneſſes againſt him, verſ.59. They held a Counſel after he was apprehended, by what means they ſhould put him to death, *Matth.*27.1. The Prieſts accuſed him with great vehemency before *Herod*, *Luk.* 23.10. They ſtirred up the multitude to ask *Barrabas*, when *Pilate* was willing to have releaſed Jeſus, *Matth.*27.20. It was the cry of the multitude that were ſtirred up by the Prieſts, and the voices of the Prieſts that prevailed with *Pilate* to crucifie Chriſt, *Luk.*23.23. After the death of Chriſt, the Prieſts took greateſt offence

offence at the Apoſtles preaching, and were the chief Agents in their impriſonment, *Acts* 4 1. And yet notwithſtanding all the oppoſition that was in the Prieſts againſt Chriſt, and the Doctrine of the Goſpel, ſuch was the power of the Word of God, that thereby a great number of the Prieſts were converted to the faith of Chriſt, *Act.*6.7. *The word of God increaſed, and the number of the Diſciples multiplied in Jeruſalem greatly, and a great company of the Prieſts were obedient to the Faith.*

Beſides this, conſider the excellency and weightineſs of the matter contained in the Scriptures: They reveal to us the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, Gods eternal Counſel concerning our ſalvation, the gracious Covenant God hath made with man; They reveal to us Gods Attributes, his works of Creation and Providence, the great Myſtery of our Redemption, They ſhew to us how we may ſerve, glorifie, and enjoy God, which is mans chiefeſt happineſs: They treat of the Torments of Hell, and of the unſpeakable Joys and Glory of Heaven, and ſhew us how we may avoid the one, and get poſſeſſion of the other: In a word, they diſcover to us ſuch excellent things as the eye of man never ſaw the like, neither did ear hear, neither can it enter into the heart of man to conceive the tranſcendent worth and dignity of them: 1 *Cor.*2.9,10. They open ſuch Myſteries as the Angels of Heaven deſire and delight to look into them: 1 *Pet.*1.12. *Which things the Angels deſire to look into.* And ſhall we hide ſuch excellent things as theſe are, from our Children? We ſhould reſolve with full purpoſe of heart as the godly Jews of old did concerning thoſe glorious things which their Fathers had told them, *Pſal.*78.4. *We will not hide them from their Children,*

ſhewing

ſhewing to the Generations to come the praiſes of the Lord. I might adde further, There is nothing revealed in the Scriptures, but what is of great and near concernment to us and to our Children, and that as long as we and they ſhall live in this world, *Deut.*29 29. *The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God, but thoſe things which are revealed, belong unto us and to our Children for ever, that we may do all the words of this Law.* If thoſe things that are treated of in the Scriptures, did not belong to us, or to our Children, we might have ſome excuſe for not teaching them the word of God: But what Apologie can we make for our neglect of this Duty, ſeeing they were revealed purpoſely for us and our Children to be converſant therein as long as we live? They are of ſuch near and great concernment to us, as that every mans Judgment for his eternal ſtate ſhall be given at the laſt day, according to what is in the written word, *John* 12.48. *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the words that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge him in the laſt day.* Rev.20.12. *And I ſaw the dead ſmall and great ſtand before God; and the Books were opened, and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the Dead were judged out of thoſe things which were written in the Books, according to their works.*

Sect. 14.

They deal unjuſtly with their Families who defraud them of the Inſtruction that is due to them.

14 *Motive.* THe Law of Equity requires that Parents ſhould uſe their utmoſt diligence to inſtill knowledge into their Children, and to train them up in a godly ſort,

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1. Becauſe they have been inſtrumental to convey to them a ſinful ignorant nature, *Pſal.*51.5. *Job* 14.4. If one man had hurt another, the Law of God delivered by *Moſes*, required that he ſhould be at the coſt and pains to get him throughly healed, *Exod.* 21.19.—*He ſhall pay for the loſs of his time, and cauſe him to be throughly healed.* Seeing Parents are inſtrumental to convey that ſin to their Children which hath given their Souls a deadly wound, tis but juſt and equal that they ſhould be at the coſt, and take pains to get them healed of their ignorance, and do what in them lieth to get their Souls converted to the Lord.

2. It is juſt and equal that we ſhould teach our Children, becauſe God hath taught us his Word for this very end and purpoſe that we ſhould teach the ſame unto our Children: *Deut.*4.10. *The Lord ſaid unto me, Gather the people together, and I will make them hear my words,—that they may teach their Children.*

3. Juſtice requires that we ſhould give to every one that which is due to him: He that detains from any one that which is his due, when it is required, and it is in the power of his hand to render it, is an unjuſt man: Now Inſtruction is due to our Children and Servants; for God commands us, as we have heard before, to inſtruct them, and their neceſſity calleth aloud upon us to be diligent in teaching and inſtructing them; and therefore we cannot with-hold inſtruction from them, without being guilty of injuſtice: And it is a great crime to be guilty of injuſtice; Unjuſt perſons are accounted amongſt the chiefeſt of Sinners. And to with-hold from our Children or Servants that which is due to their Souls, is greater injuſtice then to wrong them in their

their Estates, or in those things which are due to to their outward man: If then we would fulfill that Precept, *Col.*4.1. *Masters give unto your Servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye have a Master in Heaven*: And that of the Apostle, *Rom.* 13.7. *Render to all their dues*: And that of *Solomon*, *Prov.*3.27. *With-hold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.* We must not neglect this good work of teaching and instructing our Children and Servants, seeing Instruction is due to them.

Let thus much suffice by way of motive, to stir up Parents and Masters of Families to set upon a diligent performance of this duty of training up their Children and Servants in the Knowledge and Obedience of the Scriptures.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Directions for managing of this Work of Family-Inſtruction, ſo as to promote the Converſion, Edification, and Eternal Salvation of all that are under our Charge.

I Shall in the next place proceed to ſome Directions for the ſucceſsful managing of this work of Family-Inſtruction, and ſhall ſhew how we ſhould carry it on, ſo as to promote the Converſion, Edification, and Eternal Salvation of all ſuch as are under our Charge.

Sect. I.

Such as would inſtruct their Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures, muſt be diligent in ſtudying the Scriptures.

Direct. 1. IF we would inſtruct our Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures, it is neceſſary that we our ſelves ſhould be well acquainted with them; and that we may come to be well acquainted with the Scriptures, we muſt read them often, obſerve diligently what we read, and pray to God to open our underſtandings, that we may underſtand his holy Word, and lay up what he teacheth us in our hearts, and meditate in his Law night and day.

day. Before the Lord commands us to teach his Word to our Children, he prefixeth this Charge, That we should lay up his Word in our own hearts, *Deut.*6.6,7. *These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children.* And the Apostle calls upon those whom he would have teach others, to let the word of Christ dwell richly in themselves; *Col.*3.16. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another*—— A daily searching of the Scriptures, attended with Meditation and Prayer, will greatly advantage us in this work of Family-Instruction, and that in several respects; I will instance in two:

1. Hereby we shall be furnished with wisdom and knowledge, *Psal.*119.98,99. *Thou through thy Commandments hast made me wiser than mine Enemies, for they are ever with me: I have more understanding than all my Teachers, for thy Testimonies are my meditation.* And the more we are furnished with Heavenly Wisdom, the more dextrous and ready we shall be to win those Souls that are committed to our charge: *Prov.*11.30. *He that winneth Souls is wise.* 2 Cor.12. 16. *Being crafty, I caught you with guile.* And as wisdom will make us dextrous in winning Souls to Christ; so also it will conduce much to the inabling of us to edifie and build up such as are brought home to him, *Col.*1.28. *Teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.* The *Romans*, who were filled with knowledge, were thereby made able to teach and admonish others, *Rom.*15.14. *I my self am perswaded of you, my Brethren, that ye also are full of Goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.*

2. By searching the Scriptures, and meditating on

on them night and day, we ſhall become ſucceſsful in this work of Family-Inſtruction, God will make this work proſper in our hands to the Converſion, Edification, and Salvation of ſuch as he hath committed to our care, to be inſtructed in his holy word: For the Lord hath promiſed that whatſoever that man doth who meditates in his Law, it ſhall proſper: *Pſal.* 1,1,2,3. *Bleſſed is the man that walketh not in the counſel of the ungodly——But his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate day and night: And he ſhall be like a tree planted by the Rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his ſeaſon; his leaf alſo ſhall not wither, and whatſoever he doth ſhall proſper:* *Ezra* who was a ready Scribe in the Law of *Moſes*, *Ezra* 7 6. taught Gods Word to the people of *Iſrael*, verſ. 10. And what effect had his teaching? It had great power to humble and reform the people, *Ezra* 10. 1,12. *The people wept very ſore. Then all the Congregation anſwered and ſaid with a loud Voice, As thou haſt ſaid, ſo muſt we do.* *Apollos* who was *mighty in the Scriptures*, Acts 18. 24. was very ſucceſsful in the Conviction and Converſion of obſtinate ſinners: for *he mightily convinced the Jews*, verſ. 28. And in the edification of ſuch as were converted to the faith, verſ. 27. *Who when he was come helped them much which had believed through grace.*

Sect. 2.

We muſt teach our Families the knowledge of the principles and the practice of the Duties of Religion. Nothing but the Truth. Soul-ſaving Truths. What are Soul-ſaving Truths? Seaſonable Truths.

Direct. 2. Conſider well what Doctrine you teach your Families, if you would convert and ſave their Souls. For by taking heed to the Doctrine that you inſtil into them, you may ſave both their and your own Souls: 1 *Tim.*4.16. *Take heed to thy ſelf, and unto thy Doctrine, continue in them, for in doing this, thou ſhalt ſave both thy ſelf and them that hear thee.*

If any ask, What Doctrine ſhould we teach our Families, in order to the Converſion, Edification, and Salvation of their Souls.

I anſwer: In the general, teach them the holy Scriptures: I have proved already that it is the Will and Command of God that we ſhould inſtruct our Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures, Chap. I. Sect. 1. And I have alſo ſhown that teaching Gods Word to our Families will be a means of their Converſion, *Pſal.*19.7. *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul*, and of their edification, *Acts* 20. 32. *I commend you to God, and the Word of his grace, which is able to build you up*——And of their Salvation, *Rom.*1.16. *I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt, for it is the power of God unto Salvation.* As the Reader may ſee more largely in the peruſal of the firſt and ſecond Chapters.

If any ſay, Tell us more particularly what Doctrine we ſhould teach our Families out of the Scriptures

ptures in order to their Converſion, Edification and Salvation?

Anſw. 1. Inſtruct them in the knowledge of the Principles of Religion: As for inſtance: Teach them that there is a God, and that this God is a Rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him: And who is the true God: That there is but one God, and that this one God ſubſiſteth in three diſtinct Perſons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt: That God is a Spirit, and they that worſhip Him muſt worſhip Him in Spirit and Truth: That God knoweth all things, is every where preſent, Almighty, Eternal, Holy in all his Works, and Righteous in all his Ways, Faithful, Juſt, Abundant in Mercy, *&c.* That God made the Heavens and the Earth, and all things therein, and Rules and Governs all his Creatures by his Wiſe and Gracious Providence: That Man was created in the Image of God, and ſinned againſt God by eating the Forbidden Fruit: That by *Adam*'s Diſobedience all Men were made Sinners, and are by Nature the Children of Wrath; and that Judgement came upon all men to Condemnation: That God out of his great Love ſent his only begotten Son into the World, to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt: That JESUS of NAZARETH, who was conceived of the Holy Ghoſt, born of the Virgin MARY, ſuffered under PONTIUS PILATE, was the promiſed MESSIAH: That He died for our Sins, and roſe again the third day, and aſcended into Heaven where he ſitteth at the right hand of God, making interceſſion for all that come to God by him; from whence He ſhall come again to judge the World in Righteouſneſs: That God for Chriſt his ſake hath made a New Covenant, wherein he hath promiſed Remiſ-

sion of sins, Sanctification, eternal Life, and all other good things freely to them that believe on his Son: That those whom God hath ordained to eternal Life he calleth out of Darkness into Light, and turneth them from their sins unto God, and unites them to Christ by faith, and puts his Spirit into them, and causeth them to walk in his Ways, and to serve him in Holiness and Righteousness all the days of their Life: That there shall be a general Resurrection of the Dead, both of the Just and Unjust, that after the Dead are raised, the whole world shall appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, that every one may receive according to what he hath done while his Soul lived in his Body: That such as have lived and died in their sins without Repentance shall be cast into Hell, where they shall abide with the Devil and his Angels in everlasting fire; And such as have believed in Christ, and repented of their sins, shall be received into Heaven, where they shall be ever with the Lord. It is necessary that you should teach your Children and Servants the knowledge of the Principles of Christian Religion: *Heb.* 5. 12. *Ye have need that one teach you again which be the first Principles of the Oracles of God.* For Knowledge is the foundation of Practice, *Psal.* 119. 34. *Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy Law, yea I shall observe it with my whole heart.* And *Solomon* tells us, *Prov.* 29. 2. *Also that the Soul be without knowledge, it is not good.*——And as you must teach them the knowledge of the Principles, so also the practise of the Duties of the Christian Religion, as to believe in Christ, to repent of their sins, to love God with all their Hearts, and to love their Neighbours as themselves; to do the same things unto others, which they would that others

ſhould do unto them, to deny themſelves, to love their Enemies, to do good to them that hate them; to read, hear, and meditate on Gods Words, to be contented in every eſtate, *&c.* Knowledge without Obedience will be ſo far from leading them to everlaſting life, that it will make them have the greater condemnation: *Luk.* 12. 47. *That Servant which knew his Lords will, and prepared not himſelf, neither did according to his will, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes.* But by teaching your Families both to know and do the will of God, you ſhall make them partakers of eternal Happineſs: *John* 13. 17. *If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if you do them.* Thus *David* inſtructed his Son, he taught him both to know and ſerve the Lord, 1 *Chron.* 28. 9. *And thou Solomon my Son, know thou the God of thy Father, and ſerve him with a perfect heart and willing mind.*

2. Teach them nothing but the Truth: Do not pervert and wreſt the Scriptures to their and your own deſtruction. Do not give them poyſon inſtead of the ſincere milk of the Word: It was the practiſe of Chriſt and of his Apoſtles to teach nothing but the Truth, *Matth.* 22. 16. *Maſter we know that thou art true, and teacheſt the way of God in truth:* 2 Cor. 2. 17. *We are not as many which corrupt the word of God, but as of ſincerity, as of God, in the ſight of God ſpeak we in Chriſt:* By teaching them the Word of God in truth, you ſhall be inſtrumental to their Regeneration: *Jam.* 1. 18. *Of his own will begat he us, with the word of Truth;* and the rendring of them fruitful in good works, *Col.* 1. 6. *Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth alſo in you, ſince the day that ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:* And be a means of ſaving their Souls: for it is by the know-

ledge and belief of the Truth that we are brought to ſalvation, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 13. *God hath from the beginning choſen you to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the Truth.* It is ſaid, *Prov.* 14. 25. *A true witneſs delivereth Souls:* By a true Witneſs we may underſtand one that inſtructeth thoſe that are under his Charge in the knowledge of the Truth: The Hebrew word עד which we render a Witneſs, is ſometimes uſed, as *Kircher* obſerves, *pro prædicatore*, for a Teacher; and we find the word Witneſs uſed in this ſignification, *Act.* 26. 16. *To make thee a Miniſter and a Witneſs.* And then the words may have this ſence, That teaching and inſtructing perſons in the knowledge of the Truth, is a means to deliver their Souls from eternal deſtruction.

III. Teach them Soul-ſaving Truths. By Soul-ſaving Truths, I mean ſuch Truths as will be a certain and infallible means of ſaving your Children and Servants Souls, if they be rightly underſtood, firmly believed, and ſincerely practiſed.

If you ask, What are thoſe Truths which will be a means of ſaving our Children and Servants Souls, if we teach them to our Families?

I anſwer: Such as theſe:

1. Teach them to know GOD and his Son JESUS CHRIST; by ſo doing you ſhall guide them into the path of Life: For *John* 17. 3. *This is life eternal, That they may know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent.*

2. Teach them their loſt and miſerable condition by Nature; their need of, and their miſery without Jeſus Chriſt, and the way and means by which they may come to be partakers of Chriſt: For if you can draw them to Chriſt, they ſhall not

miſs

miss of eternal Life: 1 *John* 5.12. *He that hath the Son, hath Life.*

3. Explain to them the Covenant of Grace, what great Mercies and Blessings are contained in the Covenant; that their Souls may long to be brought under the Bond of the Covenant; shew them also how and by what means they may get into Covenant with God: for if you can bring them to lay hold upon the Covenant of Grace, you shall make them Partakers of Salvation: for eternal Life and Salvation is promised to such as are in Covenant with God: 2 *Sam.*23.5. *He hath made with me an everlasting Covenant——and this is all my Salvation.*

4. Shew them the nature, necessity, and excellency of faith in Christ, and labour to bring them to believe in Jesus Christ: If they be brought to believe in Christ, they shall certainly have everlasting Life: *John* 6.47. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting Life.*

5. Teach them the nature and necessity of Repentance, and press home upon them such Scriptures as may stir them up to the practice and exercise of Repentance; if you can by any means bring them to a true and unfeigned Repentance, you shall thereby save their Souls: *Ezek.*33.14,16. *Again, when I say to the Wicked, Thou shalt surely die, if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right—— he shall surely live.*

6. Teach them to serve and obey the Lord Jesus Christ; for he will save all those that obey him: *Heb.* 5.9. *He became the Author of eternal Salvation to them that obey him*

7. Teach them to love God with all their Hearts and Souls; and to love Him above all Persons and Things that are in the world: Eternal Life is promi-

sed to such as love God: *Jam.* 1.12. *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

8. Teach them to fear and reverence the Lord; and that you may breed the fear of the Lord in their Souls, acquaint them with the Power, Holiness, Goodness, Justice, Omniscience, and Omnipresence of God, and his other glorious Attributes: for the fear of the Lord ariseth from, and is produced by the knowledge of God, *Job* 37.23,24. *Prov.* 2.5. and put them in mind of Gods Covenant, wherein the Lord hath promised to put his fear into our hearts, *Jer.*32.40. If you can bring your Families to fear the Lord, you shall save their Souls; *Prov.*19.23. *The fear of the Lord tendeth to life*; Psal. 145.19. *He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him, he also will hear their Cry, and will save them.*

9. Teach them to hope in God, for all those good things which are promised in the Covenant of Grace, and to keep up their hope in God under all their troubles and temptations; by hoping in God, they shall obtain the salvation of their Souls, *Rom.*8. 24. *We are saved by hope.*

10. Teach them the nature of Prayer, to whom they must pray, and for what; and how they must pray, if they would find acceptance with God: The Lord Jesus taught his Disciples how to pray, and *John* the Baptist did the like to his Disciples, *Luke* 11.1. *One of his Disciples said unto him, Lord teach us to pray, as John also taught his Disciples.* By teaching your Families to call upon God in an acceptable manner, you shall promote their salvation; *For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved*, Rom.10.13.

11. Teach

11. Teach them to be ſincere, and to walk uprightly with God; for if they walk uprightly they ſhall be ſaved; *Prov.*28.18. *Whoſo walketh uprightly ſhall be ſaved.*

12. Teach them to wait upon God in all his Ordinances, and to wait for the accompliſhment of all his Promiſes. They that wait on the Lord are under a promiſe of Salvation: *Prov.*20.22. *Wait on the Lord, and he ſhall ſave thee.*

13. Teach them the way to obtain the Remiſſion of their ſins: for if they obtain the pardon of their ſins, they ſhall be in a bleſſed condition; *Rom.* 4. 7. *Bleſſed are they whoſe iniquities are forgiven.*——And ſhall obtain everlaſting life; *Rom.*8.30. *Whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.*

14. Teach them to avoid evil company, and to walk and converſe with ſuch as fear God, that may prove a means of their ſalvation, *Prov.*9.6. *Forſake the fooliſh and live; and go in the way of underſtanding:* Prov.15.20, *He that walketh with wiſe men ſhall be wiſe.*

15. Exhort them to perſevere in the faith of Chriſt, and to continue in their obedience of his Commandments as long as they live; for in ſo doing, they ſhall aſſuredly obtain everlaſting life, *Rev.* 2. 10. *Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life*: Matth.24.13. *He that ſhall endure to the end, the ſame ſhall be ſaved.* In a word, whatever Duties have a promiſe of Salvation annexed to the performance of them, inſtruct them in the nature, and ſtir them up to the practice of thoſe Duties.

IV. Teach them Seaſonable Truths: The more ſuitable and ſeaſonable the Inſtructions are, which you give your Families, the more good they will receive

receive from them; *Prov.*15.23. *A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season how good is it?* By teaching them seasonable Truths, I mean,

1. That you should suit your Instructions to their state and condition, whether they be in a state of nature or a state of grace; under temptations and spiritual trouble, or free from it; in a sleepy secure condition, or in an awakened, convinced condition, but not converted: or if converted, consider whether they go forward, and walk as becometh the Gospel; or whether they decline and walk unsuitable to their profession.

2. Caution them against the sins of the times and places where they live, or where their lot is like to be cast in time to come; and caution them against the sins that their age, condition, constitution, or calling, are liable to be assaulted withall. Thus the Apostle counsels *Timothy*, who was a young man, to flee youthful lusts, 2 *Tim.*2.22. and cautions him against such sins as he would be incident to in the discharge of his Calling, as Partiality, 1 *Tim.*5.21. Rashness, vers.22. *&c.*

3. Have an eye to the various Dispensations of Gods Providence, both towards the Nation, and your own or other Neighbouring Families, and instruct them how to improve such Providences. As for instance, if the Lord send the Sword, or Pestilence, or Famine, or any other great Judgment upon the Nation, teach them what duties God expects from them under such Judgments, and what means they should use that they may be hid in the day of the Lords anger, and be preserved in time of common calamity. Or if God send sickness, or death, or any other affliction, into your own or your Neigh-

Neighbouring Families, teach them what uſe they ſhould make of ſuch afflictions.

4. If there ariſe any errors, or any Seducers come into the places where you live, caution them againſt thoſe errors, and bid them beware of thoſe Seducers, and eſtabliſh their Judgments in the belief of thoſe Truths which are oppoſite to thoſe Errors, that ſo they may not be led away by them.

Suit your Inſtructions to their Capacities, and teach them ſuch things as they are moſt capable to underſtand. When our LORD JESUS CHRIST inſtructed the People, he had reſpect unto the Capacities of his Hearers, *Mark* 4. 33. *With many ſuch Parables ſpake He the Word unto them, as they were able to bear:* John 16. 12. *I have yet many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.* The like alſo we may ſee in his Apoſtles, 1 *Corinth.* 3. 1, 2. *And I Brethren, could not ſpeak unto you as unto Spiritual, but as unto Carnal, even as unto Babes in Chriſt. I have fed you with Milk, and not with Meat: For hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet are ye now able.*

SECT. 3.

What manner of Inſtruction is moſt edifying? What are edifying Duties?

Direct. 3. IF you would convert, edifie and ſave the Souls of ſuch as are under your charge, by thoſe Inſtructions which you give unto them, do not only teach them ſound and Soul-ſaving Doctrine, but teach them in an edifying manner: The manner as well as the matter of Inſtruction, condu-

conduceth much to edification: *Act.* 14. 1. *They ſo ſpake, that a great multitude both of the Jews, and alſo of the Greeks, believed*: There is an emphaſis in the word *ſo*, which reſpecteth the manner of their teaching; the manner of their teaching was ſuch, that it became ſucceſsful for the converting of great multitudes to the Faith of Chriſt.

If any ſay, In what manner ſhould we teach our Families, ſo as to promote their Edification?

I anſwer:

1. Search out ſuitable and pertinent Scriptures for proving and explaining thoſe points wherein you purpoſe to inſtruct them, and digeſt them into a good method. Such a courſe as this the Preacher took in teaching the people, *Eccleſ.* 12. 9. *Becauſe the Preacher was wiſe, he ſtill taught the people knowledge, yea, he gave good heed, and ſought out and ſet in order many Proverbs.* And by his ſelecting choice portions of Scripture, and ſetting them in order, his words became like Goads and Nails, that pierced deep, and ſtuck faſt in the hearts of his Hearers, verſ. 11. The Word of God aptly and rightly applied, hath great force to work upon the Conſcience; *Job* 6. 25. *How forcible are right words?*

2. Explain the ſence and meaning of thoſe Scriptures which you teach your Families, if they contain any difficulties that are above their underſtandings, *Neh.* 8. 8. *So they read in the Book in the Law of God, and gave the ſence, and cauſed them to underſtand the reading.* The Lord commanded the Jews not only to train up their Children in the uſe, but to teach them the meaning of his Ordinances, *Exod.* 12. 26, 27. *It ſhall come to paſs when your Children ſhall ſay unto you, What mean you by this ſervice? That ye ſhall ſay,*

ſay, *It is the Sacrifice of the Lords Paſſover, who paſſed over the Houſes*, &c. The plainer you make the Truths which you teach your Families, the greater efficacy they will have upon their hearts to produce Faith and Obedience: *John* 16. 29,30. *Lo now thou ſpeakeſt plainly, and ſpeakeſt no Proverbs: Now are we ſure that thou knoweſt all things.*——*By this we believe.*——

3. Teach them that the Scriptures are the word of God, and adviſe them to receive thoſe Counſels, Reproofs, and Exhortations, which you give them out of the Scriptures, not as yours, but as the Counſels, Reproofs, and Exhortations of God. Exhort them to look upon the Doctrines, Precepts, Threatnings, Promiſes, *&c.* which are contained in the Scriptures, to be as truly and really the word of God, and to be embraced with the ſame Faith and ready Obedience as if they heard God ſpeaking the ſame things with an audible Voice from Heaven. This perſwaſion will make thoſe Inſtructions which you give them out of the Scriptures to take place, and work effectually upon their hearts, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 13.——*When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which worketh effectually in them that believe.*

4. Teach them to make a particular application to their own Souls of thoſe Inſtructions which you give them out of the Scriptures. As the Prophet *Malachy* made a particular application of what he taught the Prieſts, *Mal.* 2. 1. *And now, O ye Prieſts, this Commandment is for you*: So muſt Parents deal with their Children: O my Children, this Commandment of keeping holy the Sabbath day, of loving God with all your heart, and your Neighbour

as your self, &c. is for you: And this Threatning, *If you live after the flesh you shall die, the Companion of Fools shall be destroyed*, &c. is for you; you shall die as well as any persons in the world, if ye live after the flesh, and if ye will keep evil company, &c. And this promise is for you, *They that seek the Lord shall want no good thing*, &c. *If you will seek the Lord he will give you all good things:* And the example of Gods Judgments on such as murmured, and such as committed fornication, &c. was written for your admonition, to deter you from committing those sins, 1 *Cor.* 10. 8, 10, 11. When *Eliphaz* had been instructing *Job* in several things concerning the misery of wicked men, the nature of afflictions, the blessings that God bestoweth on godly men, &c. he concludes his discourse thus, *Job* 5. 27. *Lo this we have searched it, so it is, hear it, and know it for thy good*; (or as it is in the Margin) *for thy self.* From the different rendring of the last clause of this Verse, we may draw this note, That then a man knows Divine Truths for his good, when he knows them for himself; that is, the way for a man to get good by the knowledge of Divine Truths, is to make a particular application of them to his own Soul.

5. When you instruct them in the performance of any duty, either towards God or their Neighbour, teach them how and in what manner to perform that duty; shew them also the necessity of it, and the advantages and benefits that will come to them if they follow your counsel, and the evils that will befall them if they neglect it. Thus *David* instructed *Solomon*, he exhorts him to know and serve the Lord, 1 *Chron.* 28. 9. *And thou Solomon my Son, know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him*—— Then he shews him in what manner he must serve the Lord,

Lord, willingly and ſincerely, *Serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind:* He tells him why it was neceſſary that he ſhould ſerve the Lord with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: *For the Lord ſearcheth all hearts, and underſtandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts:* He acquaints him alſo with the benefit that he ſhould receive if he would ſeek and ſerve the Lord——*If thou ſeek him, he will be found of thee*; and with the evils that would come upon him if he forſook the Lord——*But if thou forſake him, he will caſt thee off for ever.* It is ſaid of *Solomon, Eccleſ.* 12.10. *The Preacher ſought out acceptable words*, or as ſome render it, *verba deſiderii*, words that might ſtir up deſires after thoſe things which he taught the people, words that might win and gain upon their affections. Follow *Solomon*'s example in teaching your Children, ſeek out ſuch Scriptures as may put an edge upon their affections, and inflame them with a deſire to practiſe thoſe things which you teach them to be their duty. Conſider alſo what may dicourage or hinder them from the performing thoſe Duties which you preſs upon them, and endeavour to remove thoſe hindrances: for what the Apoſtle ſaith in another caſe, 2 *Theſ.* 2.7. the ſame is true here, *That which now letteth, will let, until it be taken out of the way.*

6. So teach them their duty, as alſo to direct them where they may have ſtrength to perform it. And to that end guide them to Chriſt, without whom they can do nothing, *John* 15.5. *Without me ye can do nothing*; and by whoſe help they ſhall be able to do all things, *Phil.* 4.13. *I can do all things through Chriſt which ſtrengthneth me.* By which means, when they find no ſtrength in themſelves, they ſhall be able to ſay they have it in Chriſt: *Surely ſhall one ſay, In the*

Lord

Lord have I Righteousnes and Strength, Isa. 45. 24. And seeing Christ conveys his strength to us in a way of Reliance upon him, (for it is through faith that out of weakness we are made strong, *Heb.* 11. 34.) and seeing faith is helped much by the promises, when you instruct them in their duty, guide them to some promise of the Covenant of Grace, where God hath promised to inable them to perform that duty; that so by the help of the promises they may trust in Christ to work all their works in them and for them, and may through faith in him receive strength to walk before God in newness of Life. Thus when the Apostle taught the *Romans* that they should not let sin have dominion over them, *Rom.* 6. 12. *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal Bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof*: He presently puts them in mind of a promise, wherein the Lord hath promised so to over-rule us by his grace, that sin shall not have the Dominion over us, vers. 14. *Sin shall not have the Dominion over you. for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace.*

7. If you would so instruct your Families as to edifie them in your Teaching, then stir them up to the practise of those Duties which make for their edification: As,

First, To walk in the fear of the Lord, *Act.* 9. 31. *The Churches were edified, walking in the fear of the Lord.*

Secondly, To live in love and peace: 1 *Cor.* 8. 1. *Charity edifieth*: Ephes. 4. 16. ——*Maketh increase of the Body, unto the edifying of it self in love*: Rom. 14. 19. *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith we may edifie one another.*

Thirdly, To get Faith, and to live by Faith after

after they have gotten it, 1 *Tim.* 1. 4. *Godly edifying, which is in faith.*

Fourthly, To pray in a fervent, gracious, ſpiritual manner: *Jude* 20. *But ye Beloved, building up your ſelves, in your moſt holy faith, praying in the holy Ghoſt.*

Fifthly, To meditate often on what you have taught them: 1 *Tim.* 4. 15. *Meditate upon theſe things, give thy ſelf wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear unto all.*

Sect. 4.

What are the fitteſt times and ſeaſons for inſtructing our Families.

Direct. 4. THe ſeaſonableneſs of a work makes it amiable; *Eccleſ.* 3. 1, 11. *To every thing there is a ſeaſon, and a time to every purpoſe under Heaven.——He hath made every thing beautiful in his time.* The ſeaſonableneſs of a work renders it alſo the more ſucceſsful, *Pſal.* 1. 3. *He ſhall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of waters, that bringeth forth his fruit in his ſeaſon—and whatſoever he doth ſhall proſper.* Such as are Rulers of Families muſt not only provide meat for their Families, but meat in due ſeaſon; and by ſo doing, he that is the ſupreme Lord of all Families ſhall give them his bleſſing, *Matth.* 24. 45, 46, 47. *Who then is a faithful and wiſe Servant whom his Lord hath made Ruler over his Houſhold to give them meat in due ſeaſon? Bleſſed is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh ſhall find ſo doing: Verily I ſay unto you, That he ſhall make him Ruler over all his goods.*

Now concerning the times and ſeaſons that you

ſhould take for the doing this work: I ſhall give four or five directions.

1. Let this work be done when there is greateſt quiet in the Family, not at ſuch a time as the Members of the Family are diſtracted or cumbred with variety or a multitude of worldly buſineſs, or when their Spirits are royled with paſſion or contention, but when they are in the moſt quiet and compoſed frame; *Eccleſ.*9.17. *The words of wiſe men are heard in quiet.* 1 Cor.7.35. *That you may attend upon the Lord without diſtraction.*

2. Let this work be done often; *Mal.*3.16. *Then they that feared the Lord ſpake often one to another*: Deut. 6.7. *Thou ſhalt teach them diligently unto thy Children.* God worketh many ways and often times with us, to bring about our ſalvation: *Job* 33.29,30. *Lo all theſe things worketh God often times with man, to bring back his Soul from the pit, to be enlightned with the light of the Living.* And ſhall we think much to be diligent and frequent in teaching our Children and Servants that their Souls may be kept from falling into the pit of Hell; and that they may be enlightned with that knowledge which will make them wiſe to Salvation?

3. It will be convenient to have fixed and ſtated times for the doing of this work, that ſo the Family may be the better prepared for it, and all family-occaſions may be ſo ordered, and all buſineſs ſet at ſuch a ſtay, as that every one may be at liberty and leaſure to attend this work.

4. Avocations and Diverſions ſhould not be eaſily yielded to, for the putting by our intended exerciſe at the appointed time. As for inſtance: If Company come in, though they be great Perſons, and ſuch as are our Superiours, we ſhould not be aſhamed

med to go on with our works: *Pſal.* 119 46. *I will ſpeak of thy Teſtimonies alſo before Kings, and will not be aſhamed.* And if we be at any time diverted by ſome unexpected and urgent occaſions, we ſhould redeem that loſs by taking ſome other time for their inſtruction, as ſoon as conveniently we can.

5. We ſhould take ſuch times wherein both we and our Families are freſh and lively, not over-tired with worldly buſineſs, nor heavy with ſleep; for we muſt be fervent in ſpirit when we ſerve the Lord, *Rom.* 12. 11. and when the Body is tired, or heavy with ſleep, the Spirit is not likely to be fervent.

6. The Lords day (which is to be ſpent in holy and Religious Exerciſes, *Iſa.* 58. 13.) is a very convenient time for this work. It was the Cuſtom of the Jews to read the Scriptures in their Synagogues every Sabbath day, *Acts* 15. 21. *Moſes of old time hath in every City them that preach him, being read in the Synagogues every Sabbath day.* And we need not doubt but they did the ſame in their Families, ſeeing they were commanded by God to read ſome portion of his word every day as long as they lived; yea, their greateſt men, even their Kings, who had the weightieſt buſineſs of all other men lying upon their hands, were not excuſed from this Law of daily reading the Scriptures; *Deut.* 17. 18, 19. *And it ſhall be when he ſitteth upon the Throne of his Kingdom, that he ſhall write him a Copy of this Law in a Book——And it ſhall be with him, and he ſhall read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this Law, and theſe Statutes, to do them.* I ſhall not undertake to preſcribe what other days, beſides Lords days, Maſters of Families ſhould take for this work, but ſhall leave that to

their own prudence and diſcretion: Only I ſhall ſay this, That they for whom God hath done much, and who have more ſpare time than others, ſhould be more frequent and abundant in this work: For *unto whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall be much required*, Luk. 12.48.

Sect. 5.

The Advantages that come by having the Word of God in our Memories.

Direct. 5. CAuſe your Children and Servants to commit to their memories thoſe Scriptures which you teach them, and to keep them in remembrance. We are often commanded to treaſure up Gods Word in our Memories, *Job* 22.22. *Receive, I pray thee, the Law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart*: Deut. 6.6. *Theſe words which I command thee this day, ſhall be in thine heart*: And becauſe this duty of committing Gods Word to our Memories, is much neglected both by Parents themſelves as well as their Children, to ſtir up both the one and the other to the practice of it, let me ſhew you how much this duty is urged upon us, and what advantages will come by it. The Prophets of God charge us in Gods name to remember the word of the Lord, *Mal.* 4 4. *Remember ye the Law of Moſes my Servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Iſrael, with the Statutes and Judgments.* Jeſus Chriſt when he was in the world charged us to remember his word, *John* xv. 20. *Remember the word that I ſaid unto you.* The Apoſtles alſo call upon us to keep in memory Gods word, *Jude* 17. *Beloved remember ye the words that were ſpoken before of the Apoſtles of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: Acts 20.35 *I have*

ſhewn

ſhewn you all things, how that ſo labouring ye ought to ſupport the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jeſus: Heb. 2. 1. *Therefore we ought to give the more earneſt heed to the things we have heard, leſt at any time we let them ſlip.* The holy Angels when they appeared to thoſe that came to Chriſts Sepulchre, bid them remember the words of Chriſt, *Luke* 24. 6. *Remember how he ſpake unto you, when he was yet in Galilee.* One great benefit which we have by the holy Ghoſt, is, his helping us to remember Gods word: *John* 14. 26. *The Comforter, which is the holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my name, he ſhall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatſoever I have ſaid unto you.*

We have ſeen how earneſtly this duty is preſſed upon us, now let us ſee what advantages will come to us by remembring Gods Word.

1. It will be an help to Faith, *John* 2. 22. *When he was riſen from the dead, his Diſciples remembred that he had ſaid this unto them, and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jeſus had ſaid.*

2. It helps us in our obedience; *Numb.* 15. 40. *That ye may remember, and do all my Commandments, and be holy unto your God*: Pſal. 119. 55. *I have remembred thy name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy Law.*

3. It is an help to Repentance, *Matth.* 26. 75. *And Peter remembred the words of Jeſus,—and he went out and wept bitterly.*

4. It promotes our Comfort, *Pſal.* 119. 52. *I remembred thy Judgments of old, O Lord, and have comforted my ſelf.*

5. It will breed a ſpiritual frame of heart; for if Gods word be treaſured up in our hearts, it will be in our minds night and day: *Prov.* 6. 21, 22. *Bind*

them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck; when thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

6. The abiding of Gods word in our hearts and memories, will help our perseverance: 1 *John* 2.24. *If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Father and in the Son.* The way to abide in Christ, is to let his word abide in us, *John* 15.7. *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you.*——

7. It will help forward our salvation to keep in memory the word of God; 1 *Cor.* 15.2. *By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you.* It is not only useful to such as are in a state of Grace, to treasure up Gods word in their memories, but also to the Unconverted, for it may be a means of their Conversion and turning unto God: *Psal.* 22.27. *All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord*— Seeing therefore it is so advantagious for all sorts of persons to have Gods Word treasured up in their memories, cause both your Servants and Children to commit to and keep in memory, what you teach them out of the Scriptures, and to that purpose cause them often to rehearse those Scriptures wherein they have been instructed. The Hebrew word which we translate *teach diligently*, Deut. 6.7. *Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy Children*; signifieth also to repeat often one and the same thing, to inculcate it again and again with much diligence. And let not the rehearsing of the same Scriptures by and to the members of your Family be irksome and tedious to you, seeing it will prove beneficial to them: For what the Apostle saith of writing the same things to the same persons, *viz.* to the Church

at *Philippi*, *Phil.*3.1. *To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe*: The same I may say of repeating the same things in our Families, it should not be grievous to you, seeing it is safe for them.

Sect. 6.

The necessity of watching over our Families.

Direct.6. WAtch over your Families, and see whether they live according to those Instructions which you give them out of the Word of God. *Solomon* speaking of a vertuous Woman, saith of her, *Prov.*31.27. *She looketh well to the ways of her household*: A Governour of a Family must not only instruct his Houshold, but look, yea look well to the ways of his Houshold, that he may see that none of them live in any vice, or in the neglect of their duty to God or their Neighbour. We read of a man *which sowed good seed in his field, but while men slept, the Enemy came, and sowed Tares among the Wheat*, Matth. 13. 24, 25. Though we sow the good Seed of the word in our Families, yet if we sleep when we have done, that is, if we be secure and careless, and do not watch over them, the Enemy will come and endeavour to sow Tares; either the Tares of Error, or the Tares of Strife and Dissention, or some other evils.

To quicken you to this duty of watching over your Families, consider,

1. How prone mans nature is unto that which is evil, our proneness to sin is so great, that they which have had good and wholesome Instructions given to them, are very apt to turn aside, and go astray, if they be left but a little to themselves. A

remarkable instance of this we have in the Children of *Israel*, who upon *Moses* his absence by the space only of forty days, fell into the sin of Idolatry, and made a golden Calf, and worshipped the same for the God that brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*, *Exod.*32.1. to vers.9. And yet *Israel* had received many good instructions from *Moses*; yea, they had heard God himself speaking to them from Mount *Sinai*, and delivering his Law to them, wherein he had expresly charged them not to make to themselves any graven image, *&c.* And to beget the greater Reverence of his Law, there were such Thundrings and Lightnings, and such dreadful fire, as that *Moses* and all the people quaked and trembled with fear. And notwithstanding this solemn delivery of the Law of God, they quickly fell into this fearful sin of Idolatry, *Exod.*32.8. *They have turned aside quickly out of the way that I commanded them.* It was not above six weeks, as some compute the time, after the delivery of the Law, that they made this Calf; not above six months after they came out of *Egypt*, as *Rivet* observes. This sin of theirs was the more to be wondered at, because they had seen the mighty works of God upon the *Egyptians*, whose gods could not deliver them out of the Lords hand; they had also seen his wonders at the red Sea; besides, they had in a solemn manner promised obedience to all the Commands of God, *Exod.* 24.3. *All the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said, will we do.* And yet after all the Instructions and all the Ingagements that lay upon them to obey the Lord, they quickly fell into that foul sin of Idolatry.

2. Consider what a mighty charge you have to look after: It is beyond Silver, or Gold, or precious Stones,

Stones, you have the Souls of your Families committed to your charge, you have ſuch a charge of them as that you muſt give an account to God for them: *Heb.*13.17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you, and ſubmit your ſelves, for they watch for your ſouls, as they that muſt give account.*

Sect. 7.

The Uſefulneſs of Reproof, and Directions about giving Reproof.

*Direct.*7. When your Children or Servants do any thing contrary to the Inſtructions you have given them out of the Word of God, Rebuke and Reprove them. Reproofs grounded upon the Word of God, and wiſely adminiſtred, will be a great furtherance of their Souls ſalvation, as you may ſee, *Prov.*6.23. *The Commandment is a Lamp, and the Law is Light, and Reproofs of Inſtruction are the way of Life*: The ſence of which, is this, the Law of God gives us Light and Direction how to order our Converſations aright; and when perſons are inſtructed out of this Law, and reproved when they go aſtray from it, this is the way to ſave their Souls. Although ſome perſons in your Families ſhould be addicted to lying, and other hainous ſins, and have been habituated to them for a long ſeaſon, yet you may hope by inſtructing and reproving them, according to the Rules of Gods Word, that you ſhall reclaim them from their Vices, and make them ſound and ſincere Chriſtians. The *Cretians* were notorious Lyars, and ſo given to ſenſuality that they ſeemed more like Beaſts than Men, ſlothful perſons that minded little elſe but their Bellies; yet the Apoſtle would not have *Titus* deſpair

of

of reforming them, and making these *Cretians* sound and good Christians: And what course doth he direct *Titus* unto, whereby he might hope to effect this, but to instruct them in the faith of Christ, and rebuke them sharply: *Tit.*1.12,13. *The Cretians are always Lyars, evil Beasts, slow Bellies; This witness is true; wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.*

If you ask,

How shall we manage this duty of Reproof, so as to reform those persons whom we reprove?

I answer:

1. Reprove not but upon just cause, and let that cause be for something you know and can prove to be a sin against God. Thus God deals with us; when he rebukes us, 'tis for sin; *Psal.*39.11. *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity*—John 16. 8. *When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin*—If we commit sin, though it be secretly, God will not let it pass without a reproof, *Job* 13.10. *He will surely reprove you, if you do secretly accept persons.* If your Children or Servants be guilty of lying, swearing, back-biting, or any other sin, by no means forbear to rebuke them for their sins: *Lev.*19.17. *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thine heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.* You must also know and be sure that the person whom you reprove, is guilty of that sin for which you reprove him. And therefore you must not reprove upon every slight and groundless report, *Isa.*11.3. *He shall not reprove after the hearing of the Ears*: But you must inquire whether the thing that you hear be certain, and whether it be altogether

ther ſo bad as is reported. God teacheth us this by his own example, *Gen.*18.20,21. *And the Lord ſaid, Becauſe the Cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and becauſe their ſin is very grievous, I will go down now and ſee whether they have done altogether according to the Cry of it which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.* And he gives us a charge to be very wary how we proceed in judging others, till we have made full and certain enquiry into the matter of Fact, *Deut.*13.12,14. *If thou ſhalt hear ſay in one of thy Cities—Then thou ſhalt inquire, and make ſearch, and ask diligently, and behold if it be truth, and the thing certain, that ſuch abomination is wrought among you.* ——

2. The Lord doth not always chide, as the *Pſalmiſt* tells us, *Pſal.*103.9. *He will not always chide*, but takes his ſet times for rebuking of us, ſuch as he in his wiſdom judgeth moſt meet, *Exod.*32.34. In like manner, we muſt not be always chiding our Children and Servants, leſt we either break or ſink their ſpirits, or elſe make them careleſs or regardleſs of our reproofs, but it will be our prudence, when we meet with that which provoketh us to anger, and deſerveth reproof, to defer it to a convenient ſeaſon; and when we reprove, to do it effectually and to purpoſe: *Prov.*19.11. *The diſcretion of a man deferreth his anger.*

3. When you reprove your Servants or Children, inſtruct and ſhew them the evil of thoſe things for which you reprove them: And put them in remembrance of ſome Scripture that doth ſet out moſt fully and convincingly the evil and danger of that ſin for which you reprove them. And if they have no ſuch Scriptures in their remembrance, it will be good to cauſe them to take their Bibles and turn to

ſuch

ſuch Scriptures as are moſt pertinent to faſten upon their hearts that word of reproof which you ſhall give them. The Apoſtle exhorts *Timothy* to joyn Doctrine with Reproof, 2 *Tim.* 4.2. *Reprove, Rebuke, —with Doctrine.* When Chriſt reproved the *Saducees* for holding there was no Reſurrection of the Dead, he proves to them out of the Scriptures that they were in a great Error, *Matth.*22.29,31,32. Divers inſtances we have of the like nature, in his reproving the Scribes and Phariſees, wherein he joyns the quotation of the Scriptures with his Reproofs.

4. If you ſee no fruit, no amendment produced by thoſe Reproofs which you give your Family, you muſt not ſit down diſcouraged, but reprove again and again, and exerciſe much patience and long-ſuffering in the performance of this duty, 2 *Tim.*4.2. *Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-ſuffering and Doctrine.* What God ſaid to *Moſes*, *Exod.*4.8. *And it ſhall come to paſs, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the firſt ſign, that they will believe the voice of the latter ſign.* The like may I ſay here, If they turn not at the firſt Reproof, it may be they will at the ſecond; if not at the ſecond, it may be the third will prevail; but if it ſhould not, you muſt not ceaſe to do your duty, though God ſhould deny ſucceſs, but muſt be often dealing with them, and ſet before them the great danger of going on in ſin after they have been often reproved, concerning which we meet with many awakening paſſages in Scripture, as *Prov.*29.1. *He that being often reproved, hardneth his neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy:* Prov.15.10. *He that hateth reproof ſhall die:* See alſo *Prov.*1.25. to verſe 33. *Heb.*6.7, 8. *Jer.*6.8.

5. Do

5. Do not reprove them in a fury, or when you are in a paſſion: *For the wrath of man worketh not the righteouſneſs of God*, Jam. 1. 20. We are all ready to pray with *David*, *Pſal.* 38. 1. *O Lord rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chaſten me in thy diſpleaſure.* If we would not have our Lord and Father rebuke us in his wrath, ſhall we rebuke our Children and Servants in our wrath? Let this be far from us. We ſhould put on a ſpirit of Meekneſs, when we ſet upon this work of Reproof. Two Conſiderations may cauſe us to exerciſe a ſpirit of Meekneſs when we are to deal with Offenders: Firſt, When we conſider what we our ſelves have been; by nature we are as bad as others: *Tit.* 3. 2, 3.——*Shewing all meekneſs unto all men, for we our ſelves alſo were ſometimes fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.* Secondly, When we conſider what we may be, if we fall into temptation: *Gal.* 6. 1. *Brethren, if a man be over-taken in a fault, ye which are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch a one in the ſpirit of meekneſs; conſidering thy ſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted.* Our Spirits may be meek, and yet our Reproofs may be ſharp, if either the nature of the Offence or Offender require ſharp reprehenſions. If we would have our Reproofs ſharp, ſuch as may enter and pierce deep into their hearts, the way is not to uſe bitter Invectives, and rayling Expreſſions, but rather, 1. To convince them plainly and clearly of their ſin for which we reprove them: Thus *Peter* dealt with the Jews, he gives them clear and certain demonſtrations that that Perſon whom they had put to death was the promiſed *Meſſiah*, and that pricked them to the heart; *Acts* 2. 36, 37. *Let all the Houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made the ſame Jeſus whom you have crucified, both Lord and*

Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart— 2. To demonstrate to them out of the word of God the evil and danger of those things for which you rebuke them: for Gods word is called the Sword of the Spirit, *Ephes.*6.17. No sword cuts and pierces like the *sword of the Spirit. For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and the Joynts and Marrow, and is a Discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart,* Heb.4.12.

6. Reprove with wisdom, for when a Reproof is managed wisely, it becomes more amiable and successful, *Prov.* 25.12. *As an ear-ring of Gold, and an Ornament of fine Gold, so is a wise Reprover upon an obedient ear.* Our wisdom must be discovered in taking the fittest time for giving a Reproof, and doing it in a judicious manner, *Eccles.*8.5. *A wise mans heart discerneth both time and judgment:* We must take the fittest time, we must not defer too long: We must do it when we are in the best capacity to give, and the offending party to receive a Reproof: We must reprove with Judgement, which will teach us to weigh and consider the nature of the Offence, and the Offender. Some persons are of a more softly yielding disposition than others; a word will do more with one, than many blows with another; *Prov.*17. 10. *A Reproof entreth more into a wise man, than a hundred stripes into a fool.* Some Offences are more heinous for their own nature, and for their circumstances, than others. In some cases we are to rebuke secretly, *Mat.* 18.15. —*Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.*——In some cases we are to rebuke publickly in the presence of all, 1 *Tim.*5. 20. *Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also*

may

may fear. Wiſdom will direct us what to do in theſe and other ſuch like Caſes, *Eccleſ.*10.10. *Wiſ-is profitable to direct.* And that we may manage this work the more wiſely, we muſt not go about it raſhly, but conſult with our ſelves about the fitteſt ſeaſon and beſt manner of giving a Reproof: *Neh.* 5.7. *Then I conſulted with my ſelf, and rebuked the Nobles,* Prov.13.10. *With the well-adviſed is wiſdom.*

7. Look to God for Direction, Courage, and Succeſs, in giving a Reproof, and reſt upon him for his bleſſing; for the ſucceſs of every work we take in hand, depends upon Gods bleſſing: And therefore we muſt pray to God to aſſiſt, accept, and proſper us in this work. And as we muſt pray, ſo alſo reſt upon God for his bleſſing in the adminiſtring a Reproof; whether it be to ſuch as are unconverted, or to ſuch as are in a ſtate of Grace; for God hath promiſed to bleſs Reproof to both ſorts: To ſuch as are gracious, *Prov.*19.25. *Reprove one that hath underſtanding, and he will underſtand knowledge:* To ſuch as are yet in their ſins, *Pro.*24.25. *To them that rebuke him* (that is, a wicked perſon ſpoken of ver.24.) *ſhall be delight, and a good bleſſing ſhall come upon them.*

8. Reprove and tell them of their faults with a tender compaſſionate heart, not in an inſulting way, or in a way of jeſting or jearing, but rather mourning over them, and for them; *Phil.*3.18. *Many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are Enemies of the Croſs of Chriſt.*— When the Apoſtle wrote an Epiſtle to the *Corinthians* to reprove them for their indulging the inceſtuous perſon, he tells them, *Out of much affliction and anguiſh of heart I wrote unto you, with many tears,* 2 Cor.2.4.

Sect.

Sect. 8.

The Benefits of Correction. Directions for Correcting Children.

*Direct.*8. IF Reproofs do not prevail with your Children to practise those things which you teach them out of the Scriptures, correct them. Correction joyned with Instruction, rightly administred, is the way to make our Children holy and gracious, *Prov.*19.15. *The Rod and Reproof give Wisdom, but a Child left to himself bringeth his Mother to shame.* It maketh Children prove great blessings and comforts to their Parents, *Prov.*29.17. *Correct thy Son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy Soul:* Correction will be a means of preventing their eternal Damnation, by effecting their Reformation, *Prov.* 23.13, 14. *With-hold not Correction from the Child, for if thou beatest him with the Rod, he shall not die: Thou shalt beat him with the Rod, and shalt deliver his Soul from Hell.* Though they be never so much addicted to any sin, which seems to be deeply and fast-rooted in their Souls, Correction prudently and rightly administred, will be a means to reform them, and make them leave their sins: *Prov.*22.15. *Foolishness is bound in the heart of a Child, but the Rod of Correction will drive it far from him:* Prov.20.30. *The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil, so do stripes the inward parts of the Belly.*

If any ask,

How should we correct our Children so as to make our Corrections become effectual for their good?

I answer

I anſwer:

1. Begin with them betimes, before they have got too great an head, or are habituated to ſin: A Twig is eaſily bent and made ſtraight whilſt it is young, but being let alone for ſome years, it becomes inflexible: *Prov.*19.18. *Chaſten thy Son while there is hope*: Prov.13.24. *He that ſpareth his Rod, hateth his Son, but he that loveth him chaſteneth him betimes.*

2. Be not overcome with fond pity, either by their crying or pleading with you to with-hold correction from them when you ſee it meet and neceſſary to correct them; *Prov.*19.18. *Chaſten thy Son while there is hope, and let not thy Soul ſpare for his crying*: They had better cry and roar under your Rod, than roar under Gods wrath in Hell to all Eternity.

3. Joyn Faith and Prayer with your Corrections. Pray to God to bleſs the Corrections as well as the Inſtructions which you give your Children; and though you ſee no preſent fruit of your Corrections, yet be not diſcouraged, but reſt upon Gods promiſes, who hath promiſed that Correction ſhall make our Children leave their ſins, *Prov.*22.15. and be a means to ſave their ſouls, *Prov.*23.13,14.

4. In correcting your Children, imitate God in correcting his Children: As for inſtance, 1. God joyns Inſtruction with Correction, and thereby his Corrections come to have a bleſſed effect upon his Children: *Pſal.*94.12. *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſteneſt, O Lord, and teacheſt him out of thy Law:* Deal thus with your Children; when you chaſten them, teach them out of the Scriptures the evil of thoſe things for which you correct them. 2. When *God*

chaſtens, he doth not only ſhew us our ſins, but layeth his commands upon us, to leave off our ſins, *Job* 36. 8,9,10. *If they be holden in cords of affliction, then he ſheweth them their work and their tranſgreſſion that they have exceeded; he openeth alſo their ear to diſcipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.* So ſhould you charge and command your Children that they ſin no more when you correct them. 3. God is not extream to correct for every ſmall fault, *Pſal.* 130.3. *If thou Lord ſhouldeſt mark iniquities, O Lord who ſhall ſtand?* If any thing be done ignorantly, he is ready to wink at that, *Acts* 17.30. *The times of this ignorance God winked at*— 4. God diſtinguiſheth between his Children: Such as are dutiful diligent Children, ſhall not be corrected ſo ſmartly as thoſe that are careleſs and negligent, *Mal.* 3.17. *I will ſpare them as a man ſpareth his own Son that ſerveth him.* 5. When Gods deareſt Children need Correction, and he ſeeth it is for their good, they ſhall have it as well as others: So ſhould you do; If you have any Child which is dearer and more delightful than the reſt, you ſhould correct that as well as the others, when it needs Correction. *Prov.* 3.12. *Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a Father the Son in whom he delighteth.* 6. The Lord corrects in meaſure, *Jer.* 30.11. *I will correct thee in meaſure, and will not leave thee altogether unpuniſhed.* He is careful not to break or ſink his peoples Spirits by his Corrections; *Iſa.* 57.16. *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth, for the Spirit ſhould fail before me, and the Soul which I have made.* In like manner, you ſhould be careful that you do not correct your Children out of meaſure, or ſo as to ſink and quench their Spirits. 7. God doth not correct his Children in anger, but out of love, *Rev.* 3.19. *As many*

as I love, I rebuke and chaſten: And as he corrects in love, ſo he doth aim at their good, *Heb.* 12. 10. *They verily for a few days chaſtened us after their own pleaſure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his Holineſs.* In like manner, when you correct your Children, let it not be in paſſion, but out of love to their Souls, and with a deſire and deſign to do them good. 8. God tries to reform his Children firſt by leſſer and more gentle afflictions; and when they will not prevail to reform them, then he deals more ſeverely with them, and will not leave following them with one correction after another, till he hath humbled and reformed them, *Iſa.* 9. 1. *At the firſt he lightly afflicted the Land of Zebulun and Naphthali, and afterwards did more grievouſly afflict her by the way of the Sea:* Lev. 26. 23, 24. *If ye will not be reformed by theſe things, but will walk contrary unto me, then will I alſo walk contrary unto you, and will puniſh you yet ſeven times for your ſins.* So ſhould you firſt try more gentle means, and if that will not prevail, chaſtiſe them more ſeverely, and be not diſcouraged from inſtructing and correcting them, till you have humbled and ſubdued their ſpirits, and cauſed them to reform their lives.

Sect. 9.

How to keep up our Authority over our Children and Servants.

Direct. 9. IT will conduce much to the rendring of those Instructions which you give your Families, more powerful and effectual, to keep up your Authority in your Families, and so to carry your selves that your Children and Servants may reverence and respect you. It is said of Christ, *Mat.* 7.28,29. *The people were astonished at his Doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority*——And what followed hereupon? His word became very powerful, *Luke* 4.32. *They were astonished at his Doctrine, for his word was with power.* When persons reverence those that teach them, it causeth their Doctrine to work the more effectually upon their hearts and lives, *Mark* 6.20. *Herod feared John*——*and when he heard him he did many things, and heard him gladly.*

If you say,

What course should we take that we may keep up our Authority, and be reverenced in our Families?

I answer:

First, Be careful to honour God, to submit and subject your selves unto him, and then he will cause your Families to honour you, and to submit and subject themselves to your Commands; It is God that inclines mens hearts to honour us, 1 *Chron.*29.12. *Both Riches and Honour come of thee:* And when we are vilified, slighted, and disregarded, this also is of God, *Psal.*44.13. *Thou makest us a reproach to our Neigh-*

Neighbours, a ſcorn and deriſion to them that are round about us: It is God that ſubdues the hearts of Children and Servants, and other inferiours, and makes them ſubject to their Superiours, *Pſal.*18.47. *It is God that avengeth me, and ſubdueth the people under me.* And it is a Judgment which the Lord layeth upon us, when our Children or Servants carry themſelves proudly or diſobediently towards us: *Iſa.*3.5. *The Child ſhall behave himſelf proudly againſt the Ancient, and the Baſe againſt the Honourable.* Now if we be careful to glorifie God, he will cauſe us to be honoured; if we ſlight or diſregard him, he will cauſe us to be deſpiſed: 1 *Sam.*2.30. *Them that honour me, I will honour*; *and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed.* If we ſubmit our ſelves to God, he will cauſe our Wives, and Children, and Servants to ſubmit themſelves unto us, *James* 4.7,10. *Submit your ſelves therefore to God,—Humble your ſelves in the ſight of the Lord, and he ſhall lift you up*: By lifting up, is not only meant deliverance out of trouble, but it implieth alſo that God will cauſe thoſe that ſubmit themſelves to him to be honoured and reverenced, he will lift them up in the hearts and eſtimation of all ſorts of men, that they ſhall carry themſelves reſpectively towards them. But if we rebel againſt God, he will raiſe up evil againſt us out of our own Houſes, and cauſe ſome or other of our Families to carry themſelves rebelliouſly and contemptuouſly towards us. Thus when *David* had deſpiſed the Commandment of the Lord, God raiſed up evil againſt him out of his own Houſe, 2 *Sam.*12. 9,11. Whilſt he walked in the ways of God, all ſorts of perſons, ſtrangers as well as his own people, were ſubject to him; *Pſal.*18.43,44. *A people whom I have not known ſhall ſerve me*; *as ſoon as they hear of*

me, they shall obey me, the strangers shall submit themselves unto me. But when he turned aside from God, *Shimei* one of his Servants curseth him to his face, and his own Son *Absolom* riseth up in Rebellion against him.

Secondly, When your Children carry themselves undutifully or irreverently towards you, or do any thing that is sinful and displeasing to God, reprove them, and if Reproofs do not make them amend, correct them: This will make them give you reverence: *Heb.*12.9. *We have had Fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live?*

Thirdly, Avoid frowardness, intemperance, and all other vices, and carry your Souls in a holy gracious and exemplary manner: for if you be addicted to any sin, that will bring you under contempt, *Prov.* 14.34. *Righteousness exalteth a Nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.* Yea, even such as have honoured you formerly, and had you in high esteem, if they come to understand that you are tainted with any Vice, they will be ready to despise you: *Lam.*1. 8. *Jerusalem hath grievously sinned, and therefore she is removed: All that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness.* But by walking in an holy gracious exemplary manner, you shall be reverenced not only by such as are gracious themselves, but by those that are destitute of the grace of God: *Herod* was not a good man himself, our Saviour calleth him a Fox, *Luk.*13.23. because he was a subtil and cruel Enemy to Jesus Christ, and to the Christian Religion, *Luke* 13.31,32. Yet *John* the Baptist being an holy man, *Herod* reverenced him, *Mark* 6. 20. *Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man, and holy,*

and

and observed him: Prov. 22. 4. *By humility and the fear of the Lord, are Riches, and Honour, and Life.* And as an holy Converſation will procure Honour and Reſpect, ſo alſo it will preſerve the ſame; *Prov.* 11. 16. *A gracious woman retaineth honour.*

Fourthly, Carry your ſelves wiſely and diſcreetly in the managing of your Family-Affairs: for, *A mans wiſdom maketh his face to ſhine,* Eccleſ. 8. 1. But fooliſh and indiſcreet carriage will cauſe us to be ſlighted and diſreſpected, *Eccleſ.* 10. 1. *Dead flies cauſe the Ointment of the Apothecary to ſend forth a ſtinking ſavour, ſo doth a little folly him that is in Reputation for Wiſdom and Honour.*

Fifthly, Do not carry your ſelves lightly & vainly in your Families, but let your deportment be grave and ſerious, that will be a means to keep your Children and Servants in due ſubjection, 1 *Tim.* 3. 4. *One that ruleth well his own Houſe, having his Children in ſubjection with all gravity.* He cannot rule his Houſe well, that doth not keep his Children in ſubjection, for if the Children be unruly, the Servants will be ſo too; and a man ſhall hardly keep his Children in ſubjection, if his carriage be not grave and ſerious.

Sixthly, Uſe not over-much familiarity or delicacy towards your Children and Servants, eſpecially when your Children are grown up to ſome maturity, for familiarity will be apt to breed contempt, and make Children and Servants to caſt off that awe and dread which they ought to bear towards their Parents and Maſters: Children are commanded not only to love, but to fear their Parents, *Lev.* 19. 3. *Ye ſhall fear every man his mother and his father:* And Servants are commanded to fear their Maſters, *Epheſ.* 6. 5. *Servants be obedient to them that are your Maſters according*

to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart as unto Christ. Over-much familiarity will cause them to cast off this fear: *Solomon* giveth us a caution against using too much delicacy towards our Servants, as that which will spoil them, and make them prove great Crosses; *Prov.* 29. 21. *He that delicately bringeth up his Servant from a Child, shall have him become his Son at length.* The vulgar Latin renders the words, *Postea sentiet eum contumacem*; He shall find him to be stubborn and obstinate. *Pagnine* renders the words, *In novissimo erit superbus perinde ac filius*; He will become proud, and expect to be dealt with as if he were a Son, and not a Servant: When instead of that gravity and distance which ought to be in the carriage of Masters and Parents, they will be so familiar as to play with their Servants and Children, this makes them to lose their authority, according to the Proverb in use among the *Arabians*, *Colluso sive jocus aufert reverentiam*; Playing and Jesting takes away a Mans Reverence: If we use to jest and sport with our Servants or Children, we must expect no more Reverence from them. And therefore the Son of *Syrach* gives this Advice to Parents, *Eccles.* 30. 9, 10. *Cocker thy Child, and he shall make thee afraid; play with him, and he will bring thee to heaviness; laugh not with him, lest thou have sorrow with him, and lest thou gnash thy teeth in the end.* And *Plato* speaking of our carriage towards our Servants, in his Dialogue *de legibus*, gives this prudent Advice, *Neque jocus ullus, cum illis habeatur, quod multi stulte facientes, dum delicatius eos nutriunt, difficiliorem viam & sibi ad imperandum, & illis ad obediendum reddunt.* Do not use at any time to jest with your Servants, which thing many doing foolishly, do make it more difficult

difficult for themſelves to govern, and alſo more difficult for their Servants to obey, by their training them up delicately. Only here it will be needful to hint, that whilſt you labour to carry your ſelves with gravity, and to avoid too much familiarity, you had need be careful that you do not become moroſe or auſtere, but rather endeavour to expreſs much ſweetneſs and candor in your carriage towards your Children and Servants. There was laid up in the Ark *Aarons* Rod, and the Pot with *Manna*, and the Tables of the Covenant: *Greg. mag.* hath an obſervation hereupon to this effect, *He that would govern well, muſt be furniſhed with the knowledge of the Scriptures, and muſt make uſe of the Rod of Correction, yet ſo, as there muſt be the ſweetneſs of Manna with it.* We ſhould labour if it be poſſible to win our Children by love to obſerve the Commandments of God, but if they will not be drawn with Manna, then we muſt make uſe of *Aaron's* Rod, and when we are neceſſitated to uſe ſeverity, it muſt be tempered with mercy.

Sect. 10.

How to gain our Childrens and Servants affections.

Direct. 10. IT will conduce much to the rendring of this work of Family-Inſtruction ſucceſsful, ſo to carry your ſelves as that you may have the love, and gain the affections of thoſe that are under your charge: for if our Children and Servants do not only fear and reverence us, but alſo love us, the Inſtructions that we give them will be the better accepted, and make the deeper impreſſion upon their hearts. The Apoſtle *Paul* knowing *Philemon* lov'd him, was confident he would follow the counſel he gave him, *Phil.* 7. 21. *We have great joy—in thy love, —having confidence in thy obedience,* &c. The

The like confidence he had of the *Thessalonians*, 2 *Thes.*3.4. *We have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the thing which we command you.* And they were such as bore a great affection to the Apostle, 1 *Thes.*3.6. If there be a disaffection to the person that instructs, his Doctrine will do little good. *Ahab* hating *Micaiah*, received no good by his Prophecies, but went on in his own way, contrary to the good counsel of *Michaiah*, whereby he brought destruction upon himself.

If any say,

How should we so carry our selves as to get the Love and Affection of our Children and Servants?

I answer:

First, Shew your selves loving to them. Love will draw love from the worst of men, *Luk.*6.32. *Sinners also love those that love them.* Shew your love to them by speaking kindly to them, and by seeking their welfare: Hereby *Mordecai* got the love of the Jews, *Esth.*10.3. *Mordecai the Jew was —accepted of the multitude of his Brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.*

Secondly, Be kind to them, as you see occasion; give them some gifts to encourage them to learn those things that are for their good: this will win much upon their affections: *Prov.* 19. 6. *Every man is a friend to him that giveth Gifts.*

Thirdly, Give ear to their just Complaints, and be willing to redress their grievances. *Job* was ready to hear the cause and complaint of the meanest Servant in his family, even when and wherein he himself

self was concerned; *Job* 31. 13, 14. *If I did despise the cause of my man Servant, or of my maid Servant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?* And who was more loved and respected than *Job*? *Job* 29. 8, 9, 10, 11. *Absolom* by his courteous carriage and kind speeches, and by expressing his readiness to redress the grievances of the people, stole the hearts of the men of *Israel*, 2 *Sam*, 15. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. When the people of *Israel* came to *Rehoboam* with a desire to redress their grievances, his wise men counselled him to answer their desires, for thereby he should engage their affections to him for ever, 2 *Chron*. 10. 7. *If thou be kind to this people, and please them, and speak good words unto them, they will be thy Servants for ever.*

Fourthly, Answer their Requests, when they desire those things that are for their good, and which may conveniently be granted them. As Gods answering our Requests makes us love God, *Psal*. 116. 1. *I love the Lord because he hath heard the voice of my Supplications*: So our answering those Requests which our Children or Servants make to us, will engage them to love us.

Fifthly, Cover their failings and infirmities, *Prov*. 17. 9. *He that covereth a transgression seeketh love*; or (as it is in the Margent) *procureth love*: By covering a transgression, is not meant that we should forbear reproving them: for Reproof prudently administred, will not hinder, but increase love: *Prov*. 9. 8. *Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee*: But by covering a transgression, is meant, 1. That we should not twit and upbraid them with their faults, and be often repeating them, as the manner of some is, especially when they are in a passion, for this is a great

great hindrance of love, and cauſeth diſcord between inward Friends, as appears by the following words; *But he that repeateth a matter ſeparateth very friends.* 2. That we ſhould not divulge or blaze abroad their infirmities, but endeavour to conceal them.

Sect. II.

How to ingraft the Word of God in the hearts of our Children and Servants. How we may bring them in love with the Word.

Direct. 11. IF you would ſave the Souls of your Children and Servants by thoſe Inſtructions which you give them out of the word of God, endeavour to ingraft thoſe Truths which you teach them, in their hearts: for if the Word of God be ingrafted in their hearts, it will be a powerful means of ſaving their Souls, *Jam.* 1.21. *Wherefore lay apart all filthineſs, and ſuperfluity of naughtineſs, and receive with meekneſs the engrafted word, which is able to ſave your Souls.*

If you ſay,

What ſhall we do that we may get the word of God ingrafted in their hearts?

I anſwer:

Firſt, Acquaint them with Gods Covenant, wherein he hath promiſed to engrave or write his word in their hearts, *Jer.*31.33. *I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.* And ſtir them up to plead this Covenant, until they find that God according to his promiſe, hath engraven his Law upon their hearts.

Secondly,

Secondly, Cauſe them to underſtand thoſe Scriptures which you teach them; and to that end, when there is any difficulty therein explain them, and labour to beget in them a clear and right underſtanding of the word of God. When the underſtanding is enlightned with the knowledge of Divine Truths, there is way made for their entrance into and their abode in the heart, *Prov.* 14.33. *Wiſdom reſteth in the heart of him that hath underſtanding.*—— By wiſdom we may underſtand the grace of God, *Job* 28.28. *The fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom.* Now the grace of God doth not only enter into, but reſteth and maketh its abode in the heart of him that hath underſtanding. If your Inſtructions be never ſo good, though they be drawn out of the word of God, yet if they be not underſtood, they will not abide in their hearts whom you inſtruct, but will quickly vaniſh out of their minds, *Matth.* 13.19. *When any one heareth the word of the Kingdom, and underſtandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was ſown in his heart.*

Thirdly, Endeavour to fix the word of God in their memories, cauſe them often to rehearſe what you have taught them, exhort them to meditate and ponder upon thoſe Inſtructions they have received from you: This will be a means of ingrafting the *word of God* in their hearts. As the remembring of our ſins is a means of engraving our iniquities upon our hearts, *Jer.* 17.1,2. *The ſin of Judah is written with a pen of Iron, and with the point of a Diamond, it is graven upon the Table of their Hearts, and upon the Horns of their Altars, whilſt their Children remember their Altars and their Groves:* So remembring and pondering upon the Word of God, will be a means of graving or writing the Word of God upon our hearts.

Prov.

Prov. 3.1,3. *My Son forget not my Law, but let thine heart keep my Commandments——Bind them about thy Neck, write them upon the Table of thine Heart:* The binding of the Commandments about the Neck—is the ſame with not forgetting the Law, mentioned verſ. 1. This binding of the Law about the Neck, was uſed by the Jews as a Memorial to help them to keep the Commandments of God in remembrance, *Exod.*13.9. Now *Solomon* joyning theſe two together, *Bind them about thy Neck, write them upon the Table of thine Heart*; implies that the binding of the Commandments about our Neck, that is, the keeping them in remembrance, will be a means to write them upon our Hearts.

Fourthly, Inure them to godly Diſcourſe. When they are in your preſence, ſpeak often to them of the word of God; and when they are diſcourſing one with another, exhort them to diſcourſe of what you have taught them out of the word of God. Diſcourſing out of the word will be a means of imprinting the Law of God upon their hearts, *Pſal.*37. 30,31. *The mouth of the Righteous ſpeaketh wiſdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment:* And what is the fruit and effect of this good diſcourſe, is declared in the next words, *The Law of his God is in his heart, none of his ſteps ſhall ſlide.*

Fifthly, Bring them in love with the word of God; love to the Word will root and ground the Truths of God in their hearts, *Epheſ.*3.17. *Rooted and grounded in love.* Love to the word of God will root it ſo deeply and firmly in their hearts, that no troubles will cauſe them to depart from the word of God, but they will ſtick and cleave to it unto their dying day: *Cant.*8.6,7. *Love is ſtrong as death,—— many Waters cannot quench Love, neither can the Floods drown it.*

If

If you ask,

How ſhall we bring our Children and Servants to love the Word of God?

I anſwer:

1. Shew them the purity, excellency, and amiableneſs that is in the word of God; *Pſal.* 119.140. *Thy Word is very pure, therefore thy Servant loveth it.*

2. Stir them up to practiſe the word of God, that will cauſe them to love it, *Pſal.*119.167. *My Soul hath kept thy Teſtimonies, and I love them exceedingly.*

3. Shew them what a dangerous thing it is, not to love the word. God is wont to ſend down ſore Judgments upon them that do not receive his Truth in the love of it, 2 *Theſ.*2.10.11,12. *Becauſe they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be ſaved; and for this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhould believe a lye, that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs.*

4. Exhort them to put away and hate their ſins, and then they will love and delight in the word of God, *Pſal.*119.163. *I hate and abhor lying, but thy Law do I love.*

5. Counſel them to feed daily upon Gods word by Meditation and Faith, for this will cauſe them to taſte the ſweetneſs of it: *Jer.*5.16. *Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoycing of my Heart: Pſal.*104.34. *My meditation of him ſhall be ſweet.* And when they taſte the ſweetneſs of Gods word, they will love it above all things in the world: *Pſal.*119.103,128. *How ſweet are thy words unto my taſte! Yea ſweeter than Honey to my mouth; therefore I love thy Commandments above Gold, yea above fine Gold.*

Sect.

Sect. 12.

How to draw our Families to close with Christ. How to ortifie them against the offence of the Cross.

Direct. 12. ENdeavour as much as in you lieth to draw them to Jesus Christ, that they may receive and close with him upon the terms of the Gospel. Whatever Instructions you give your Families, if you leave them Christless, you leave them in a miserable perishing condition: 1 *John* 5.12. *He that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life.* But if you can prevail with them to come to and to close with Jesus Christ, they shall become the Children of God, and shall assuredly obtain everlasting Life: *John* 1.12. *As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name:* 1 John 5.12. *He that hath the Son hath Life:* John 6.47. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting Life.*

If you ask,

What shall we do that we may draw our Children and Servants to come to and close with Jesus Christ?

I answer:

First, Shew them their miserable lost and undone condition without Christ. The misery of Man without Christ, is set out by the Apostle, *Ephes.* 2.12. *That at that time ye were without Christ, being Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no Hope, and without God in the world.* In this Text the misery of such

as are without Chriſt, is ſet forth ſeveral ways:

1. They are Aliens from the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*; that is, they are none of the People of God.

2. They are Strangers from the Covenants of Promiſe; that is, they have no part or portion in any of the promiſes either of the firſt or ſecond Covenant, the Covenant of Works, or the Covenant of Grace.

3. They are without hope; They have no hope of mercy either in this world, or in the world to come: They may have much preſumption, and much carnal ſecurity, but they have no hope.

4. They are without God; that is, without the love and favour of God, without the grace of God, without any communion with and enjoyment of God. There is much alſo ſaid in few words towards the ſetting forth of the miſery of a man that is without Chriſt, in that fore-mentioned Scripture, 1 *John* 5.12. *He that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life.* He hath not the Life of Grace here, but is dead in his ſins; he hath not the Life of Glory hereafter, but is debarred of all hope of entring into the Kingdom of Heaven for ever. The conviction of their miſery and periſhing condition without Chriſt, will draw them to ſeek after Chriſt, *Luke* 15.17,18. *I periſh with hunger, I will ariſe and go to my Father:* Mat. 8.25. *His Diſciples came to him,—ſaying, Lord ſave us, we periſh.* Inform them alſo that ſalvation from their miſerable periſhing condition, is to be had in Chriſt, and no where elſe but in Chriſt, *Acts* 4.12. *Neither is there ſalvation in any other: for there is none other Name under Heaven given among men whereby they may be ſaved.* When the people of *Iſrael* ſaw that ſalvation was to be had in the Lord, and no

where elſe, this cauſed them to come to him, *Jer.* 3. 22,23. *Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God; truly in vain is ſalvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains; truly in the Lord our God is the ſalvation of Iſrael.*

Secondly, Acquaint them with the amiableneſs and excellency of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, & with what benefits they ſhall receive from him, if they embrace him, as namely, that all their ſins ſhall be pardoned, *Act.* 10.43. and their Souls ſhall be taken into Covenant with God, *Iſa.* 55.3. and they ſhall be bleſſed with all ſpiritual bleſſings, *Eph.* 1.3. and that they ſhall have all the bleſſings of Heaven for ever, *John* 3.16. When the Spouſe had ſet forth Chriſts excellencies, that he was the chiefeſt of ten thouſand, altogether lovely, *&c. Cant.* 5.10,16. They that before ſaw no beauty or comelineſs in him why they ſhould deſire him, verſ 9. *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved?* &c. fell in love with Chriſt, and began to enquire where they might find him, and how they might come to enjoy him; Chap. 6.1. *Whether is thy Beloved gone, O thou faireſt among women, whether is thy beloved turned aſide, that we may ſeek him with thee?*

Thirdly, Cauſe them to underſtand that God is very willing to beſtow his Son, and Jeſus Chriſt is very willing to beſtow himſelf upon all thoſe that feel their need of him, and are willing to receive him; as is evident from ſuch Scriptures as theſe: *Rev.* 22. 17. *The Spirit and the Bride ſay, Come; and let him that heareth ſay, Come; and let him that is athirſt come; and whoſoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely:* Iſa. 55.1. *Ho every one that thirſteth, come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no money, come ye buy and eat, yea come and buy wine and milk without money and with-*

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out price: Joh. 7. 37. *In the laſt day, that great day of the Feaſt, Jeſus ſtood and cried, ſaying, If any man thirſt, let him come to me and drink:* John 6. 37. *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* The underſtanding of Chriſts love, how willing and ready he is to receive ſuch as come to him, will be a powerful means to draw their Souls to Chriſt, *Jer.* 31. 3. *With loving kindneſs have I drawn thee:* Hoſ. 11. 4. *I drew them with the Cords of a man, with the bands of love.*

Fourthly, Inform them what Jeſus Chriſt expecteth from thoſe that come to him, and cloſe with him, if they would be owned by him for true Diſciples, and ſuch as ſhall partake of his ſaving benefits: As,

1. They muſt abandon all their ſins, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *Let every one that nameth the Name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity.*

2. They muſt deny themſelves, and take up their Croſs, and follow Chriſt, *Mark* 8. 34. *Whoſoever will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs, and follow me:* Luke 14. 27. *Whoſoever doth not bear his Croſs, and come after me, cannot be my Diſciple.*

3. They muſt love and prefer Chriſt above all their Relations, and whatſoever elſe is dear to them in the whole world, *Matth.* 10. 37. *He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.*

4. They muſt take his yoke upon them, and ſubmit to his Government, and obey his Commands; *Matth.* 11. 29. *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you ſhall find reſt unto your Souls:* John 14. 15. *If ye love me, keep my Commandments:* John 15. 14. *Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you.*

5. They must continue believing in Christ, and walking in his ways as long as they live, *John* 8. 31. *Then said Jesus unto those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my words, then are ye my Disciples indeed.* Let them know also that the Lord Jesus doth not expect that they should do these things in their own strength; but that if they look up unto him, he will give them his holy Spirit to enable them to do all these things, and whatsoever else he requireth of them: *Ezek.* 36.27. *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments and do them.*

Fifthly, Fortifie them against the Offence and Scandal of the Cross of Christ, that they may not revolt and depart from Christ after they have embraced him, when they shall meet with troubles and persecutions for the Gospels sake, as many are apt to do; *Matth.* 13.21. *Yet hath he not Root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended.*

If you ask,

How shall we fortifie our Families against the offence of the Cross, that when troubles arise for the Gospels sake, they may not fall off from the ways of CHRIST?

I answer:

First, Tell them at their entrance into Christianity what they must expect to meet withal, if they will be Christians indeed. Let them know they shall be hated in the world, 2 *Tim.* 3.12. *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* Luke 21.12. *Ye shall be hated of all men for my Names sake,* and must look for Reproaches, Confiscation of Goods,

Goods, Impriſonment, and all ſorts of perſecution. This was the means that Chriſt uſed to keep his Diſciples from being offended at the troubles ſhould come upon them: He told them before hand what they muſt expect to meet with, *John* 16.1,2. *Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that ye ſhould not be offended: They ſhall put you out of the Synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you will think that he doth God ſervice.* As it is with thoſe that build an Houſe or a Tower, they ſhould firſt ſit down and conſider what will be the coſt and charges that they muſt be at in building, *Luke* 14.28,29,30. *Which of you intending to build a Tower, ſitteth not down firſt, and counteth the coſt, whether he have ſufficient to finiſh it? Leſt haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finiſh it, all that behold it begin to mock him, ſaying, This man began to build, and was not able to finiſh.* So they who have a purpoſe to become Chriſtians, had need count what it may coſt them to be Chriſtians indeed; they muſt count upon it, that for ought they know, it may coſt them the loſs of all things, even of their Lives, and ſee whether they are willing to become Chriſtians on theſe terms, leſt after they are entred into the ways of Chriſt, they ſhould depart from them when they meet with perſecutions for the Goſpels ſake, and ſo become a reproach and and ſcandal to Religion.

2. Inform them that unleſs they be willing and reſolved to ſuffer the loſs of all things for Chriſt, when they are called to it, they cannot be the Diſciples of Chriſt, *Luke* 14.33. *Whoſoever he be of you, that forſaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my Diſciple.* And if they go about to ſave their Lives, when the Lord Jeſus calleth them to lay them down, they ſhall loſe eternal Life: *Mark* 8.35. *Whoſoever will ſave his life,*

ſhall loſe it; but whoſoever ſhall loſe his life for my ſake and the Goſpels, the ſame ſhall ſave it.

Thirdly, That they may not be diſcouraged from embracing the Lord Jeſus, and the Chriſtian Religion becauſe of thoſe ſufferings that they muſt expect to meet with in the profeſſion and practiſe of the ways of Chriſt, propoſe to them ſuch conſiderations as may encourage them to embrace the Croſs of Chriſt with chearfulneſs: As,

1. Whatſoever loſſes they ſuſtain on the Account of Chriſt or his Goſpel, ſhall be made up to them with an hundred-fold advantage in this life, and if not in the ſame kind, yet in ſome other thing which is as good or better, beſides the recompence that they ſhall have in the world to come, *Mark* 10.29, 30. *Verily, I ſay unto you, There is no man that hath left Houſe, or Brethren, or Siſters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for my ſake and the Goſpels, but he ſhall receive an hundred fold now in this time, Houſes, and Brethren and Siſters, and Mothers, and Children, and Lands, with perſecution, and in the world to come life everlaſting.*

2. The ſufferings of this preſent life will increaſe our glory in the world to come: 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. *Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.* The glory of Heaven doth ſo far exceed the ſufferings of this preſent life, that they are not worthy to be compared together, *Rom.* 8. 18. *For I reckon that the ſufferings of this preſent time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed in us.*—

3. It is our happineſs and not our miſery, to ſuffer Reproaches and perſecutions for Chriſts ſake, and it ſhould fill us with joy, rather than caſt us down with ſorrow, when we meet with any ſufferings for Righte-

Righteouſneſs ſake: *Matth.* 5. 10, 11, 12. *Bleſſed are they which are perſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Bleſſed are ye, when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſpeak all manner of evil againſt you falſely, for my ſake, rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is your Reward in Heaven:* 1 Pet. 4. 13, 14. *Rejoyce inaſmuch as ye are partakers of Chriſts ſufferings; that when his glory ſhall be revealed, ye may be glad alſo with exceeding joy: If ye be reproached for the name of Chriſt, happy are ye; for the Spirit of God and of Glory reſteth upon you.* There is a greater excellency in ſuffering for Chriſt, than in enjoying all the riches of the world, and it is far more eligible to endure the ſharpeſt afflictions, than to enjoy the delights and pleaſures of ſin, *Heb.* 11. 25. *Chuſing rather to ſuffer Affliction with the People of GOD, than to enjoy the pleaſures of Sin for a ſeaſon; eſteeming the Reproaches of Chriſt* (even thoſe things that are moſt hard to be born) *greater Riches than the Treaſures of Egypt,* or all the enjoyments in the World.

4. God will not ſuffer any man to be afflicted for Chriſt or the Goſpels ſake, above what he will enable him to bear: 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *God is Faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above what ye are able, but will alſo with the Temptation make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it.* And when we do ſuffer for Chriſts ſake, the Lord will be with us in all our ſufferings: 2 *Cor.* 4. 9. *Perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt down, but not in deſpair:* Iſaiah 43. 2. *When thou paſſeſt through the Waters, I will be with thee:* Pſalm 91. 15. *I will be with him in trouble,* &c.

5. The more we ſuffer for Chriſt, the more abundant conſolation we ſhall have from Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 1. 5. *As the ſufferings of Chriſt abound in us, ſo our Conſolation alſo aboundeth by Chriſt*; And we ſhall find more delight in our Conſolations, than we do grief in our ſufferings, *Pſal.* 94. 19. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my ſoul.*

Fourthly, Put them in mind of the great things which Jeſus Chriſt hath ſuffered for them: He became poor for our ſakes, 2 *Cor* 8. 9. *He gave his Body to be broken for us, he made his Soul an offering for our ſins*, &c. The conſideration of what Chriſt hath ſuffered for us, and how willingly he ſuffered for us (*I gave my Back to the ſmiters, and my Cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting*, Iſa. 50. 6.) will make us willing to ſuffer for him, and keep us from fainting under our Sufferings: *Heb.* 12. 3. *Looking unto* JESUS, *the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, who for the Joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of the Throne of God: for conſider him that endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf, leſt you be wearied, and faint in your minds.*

SECT.

Sect. 13.

The advantage of knowing the ſtate of our Families. How we may come to know their ſtate.

Direct. 13. ENdeavour to know the ſtate of every Member of your Families; conſider who of them are in a ſtate of grace, and who abide ſtill in an unregenerate condition: As for ſuch as are converted, ſee whether they make any progreſs, and grow in grace, or whether they ſtand at a ſtay, or decline and go backward, *Prov.*27.24. *Be thou diligent to know the ſtate of thy Flocks, and look well to thy Herds.* If a man muſt be diligent to know the ſtate of his Flocks and Herds, whether they be ſound or diſeaſed, how much more doth it concern him to know the ſtate of his Wife, and Children, and Servants, whether they be in a ſtate of Grace, or a ſtate of Nature. *Eſtius* and *Beda*, and ſome others, apply this paſſage of the *Proverbs* to thoſe that have the care of Souls committed to their Charge; The *Arabian* Tranſlation favours this interpretation, *Cognoſce animos gregis tui cognitione perfecta*: And the *Sept.* Γνωσῶς ἐπιγνῶναι ψυχὰς προβάτων σῶ.

The knowledge of the ſtate of our Families will help us,

1. To inſtruct them in thoſe things that are moſt ſuitable to their ſtate, and will conduce much to their edification: *Heb.*10.24. *Let us conſider one another to provoke unto love and good works*: By conſidering and obſerving wherein they are deficient, whether in Love, or any other Grace, as Meekneſs, Patience, Heavenly-mindedneſs, Temperance, or the like, we have an advantage to apply our ſelves to them, in a way ſuitable to their neceſſities, that we may

may provoke them to seek after those things wherein they are most defective.

2. The knowledge of their state will enable us to apply suitable comforts to them, if they be dejected and cast down, either by inward or outward troubles: *Col.*4.8. *Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts.*

3. It will tend much to our own comfort, if they be in a good estate; *Phil.*2.19. *That I may be of good comfort when I know your state.*

4. It will help us in our Prayers for them, and praising God upon their accompt. When the Apostle understood the good estate of the *Thessalonians*, it did greatly excite him to thanksgiving and prayer, 1 *Thes.*1.2,3. *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembring without ceasing your work of Faith and labour of Love, and patience of Hope*, &c. The like we may see on the behalf of the *Colossians*, Col.1.3,4.

If any say,

How should we come to know the state of our Families?

I answer:

1. By communing with the several members of our Families, and examing them whhat workings they have had upon their Souls, and whether they have any enjoyment of God in his Ordinances, and putting searching questions to them, *Psal.*139,23. *Search me, O God, and know my heart*: and vers. 1. *O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me.* As *Joseph* inquired into the state of his Brethren, *Gen.*43.7. *The man asked us straitly of our state—saying, is your Father yet alive, have you another Brother?* So should we inquire diligently into the state of our Children and Servants, by questioning with them about their conditions.

conditions: As examining our ſelves, is the way to know our own eſtate, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. So examining of others, is the the way to know anothers ſtate; but of this more in the next Direction.

2. By obſerving their carriage and converſation, we may know their ſtate; *Prov.* 20. 11. *Even a Child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.* As the Tree, ſo alſo a man is known by his Fruits; *Matth.* 7. 20. *Wherefore by their fruits ye ſhall know them.* The Apoſtle *Peter* by obſerving *Simon Magus* his carriage, plainly perceived, That notwithſtanding he made a profeſſion of faith, yet he was in an unregenerate condition, *Acts* 8. 23. *I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterneſs, and in the bond of iniquity.* And *David*, by obſerving the ſinful carriage of ſome men in his days, concluded that they were wicked men, and that they had no fear of God before their eyes, *Pſal.* 36. 1. *The tranſgreſſion of the wicked ſaith within my heart, there is no fear of God before his eyes.*

Sect. 14.

Of communing with our Children & Servants about their ſpiritual ſtate. What queſtions we ſhould put to them.

Direct. 14. THat you may know the ſtate of your Families, and carry on the work of Family-Inſtruction the more ſucceſsfully, It will be good to take ſome time to diſcourſe with them apart, about their ſpiritual ſtate, and to examine them in ſuch points as are of greateſt concernment to their Souls. And when you are communing with and examining them, it will not be amiſs to put ſuch kind of queſtions to them, as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt did now and then put to his Diſciples and others that were inſtructed by him: As for inſtance:

1. Try

1. Try whether they underſtand thoſe things which you have taught them. Thus Chriſt examines his Diſciples, *Matth.*13.51. *Jeſus ſaith unto them, Have ye underſtood all theſe things?* See what apprehenſions they have of Jeſus Chriſt, of his Perſon, his Offices, his Deſign in coming into the world, *Matth.*16.15. *Whom ſay ye that I am?* Matth.18. 11,12. *The Son of man is come to ſave that which was loſt: How think ye?*

2. Examine them about their Faith, *John* 16. 31. *Do ye now believe?* Luke 8.25. *He ſaid unto them, Where is your Faith?*

3. Enquire whether they do believe and apply the Promiſes, *John* 11.26. *Whoſoever liveth and believeth in me, ſhall never die; believeſt thou this?* And whether they believe that Chriſt is able and willing to help them in all their ſtraights, *Matth.*9.28. *Jeſus ſaith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this?*

4. Enquire whether they are convinced of their impotent condition, that they are unable of themſelves to do or ſpeak any thing that is good: *Matth.* 12.34. *How can ye, being evil, ſpeak good things?*

5. Commune with them about their love to *Chriſt*, whether they love Jeſus Chriſt above all things and perſons in the world? *John* 21.15. *Jeſus ſaith to Simon Peter, Simon, Son of Jonas, loveſt thou me more than theſe?*

6. Ask them about their ability and willingneſs to ſuffer for Chriſt, as, Whether they are willing to take up his Croſs, whether they could lay down their lives, and ſuffer the loſs of all they have for Chriſt: *Mark* 10.38. *Jeſus ſaid unto them,—Can ye drink of the Cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the Baptiſm that I am baptized with?*

7. Enquire what frame of heart they have; whether

ther they have hard or ſoft, earthly or ſpiritual, ignorant or underſtanding hearts: *Mark* 8. 17. *Perceive ye not yet, neither underſtand? Have ye your hearts yet hardened?*

8. Ask them what ground they have to hope that God will deliver them from eternal Damnation? *Matth.*23.33. *How can ye eſcape the Damnation of Hell?*

9. Enquire how they ſpend their time when they are alone, and what manner of diſcourſe they have, when they are with others; whether it be ſavoury, profitable, and ſuch as makes for Gods glory? *Luke* 24.17. *He ſaid, What manner of Communications are theſe, that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are ſad?*

10. Enquire if they read the Scriptures, and how and in what manner they read the Word of God; whether they do it with an attentive mind, with a deſire to profit by it, *&c.* *Luk.*10.26. *He ſaid unto him, What is written in the Law? How readeſt thou?*

11. Examine what they aim at in going to hear the Word of God, as Chriſt did thoſe that followed *John* the Baptiſt into the Wilderneſs, *Matth.* 11.7. *What went ye out into the Wilderneſs to ſee?*

12. Try whether they are able to reſolve the objections that may be brought againſt the main Articles of their Faith: Thus our Lord Jeſus tried his Followers with a difficult queſtion, How Chriſt could be the Son of *David*, when as *David* called him Lord? *Mark* 12.35,36,37. *David himſelf calleth him Lord, whence is he then his Son?*

13. If any of them are of a doubting troubled ſpirit, perplexed with fears, enquire into the Grounds and Cauſes of their Fears and Doubts, and

and whatever other troubles are upon their minds, *Luke* 24. 38. *He said unto them why are you troubled?*

14. Ask them, Wherein they excel others that want a Principle of Grace? What they do more than a natural man, a man that hath nothing more than a Form of Godliness? *Matth.* 5. 47. *What do you more than others?*

These and what other questions you shall judge meet, you may put to them, when you are discourling with them: As, Whether they pray? How and in what manner they pray? Whether they have any answer of their prayers? What temptations they meet with? Whether they are prepared for Death? Whether they enjoy communion with God in his Ordinances? Whether they find Sin decaying, and Grace increasing? *&c.* And when you put any questions to them, cause them to return an answer; as Christ, when he was reasoning with the Jews, called upon them to answer the question that he put to them, *Mar.* 11. 29. *Jesus said unto them, I will ask you one question, and answer me.* This communing with our Families about their spiritual estate, is seasonable at all times, but more especially when any of them are in affliction, and when they are under some eminent workings and stirrings of the Spirit of God, or when they are assaulted with temptations, or when they are to partake of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

SECT.

Sect. 15.

How to inſtil Grace into the Unconverted. What Counſel to give to ſuch as profit by our Inſtructions. How to deal with ſuch as do not profit by our Inſtructions. How with ſuch as reſt in a Form of Godlineſs. How with ſuch as are in a declining condition.

Direct. 15. ACcording to the ſtate and condition that you find your Family to be in, apply your inſtruction ſuitable to the caſe of the ſeveral Members thereof: As for inſtance:

Firſt, If you find any of your Children or Servants to be in an unconverted condition, endeavour as far as in you lieth to inſtil Grace into their hearts, and to convert them to God; *Pſal.* 34. 16. *Come ye Children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* We ſhould not only teach our Children to know the Lord, but we muſt alſo teach them to fear the Lord. It may be you will ſay, *Can we inſtil Grace into our Children? Can we put the fear of God into their hearts? Can we give them Repentance?* I anſwer, No; but we may uſe the means, and in ſo doing we may hope for Gods bleſſing.

If you ask,

What means ſhould we uſe to inſtil Grace into, and convert ſuch of our Families as are in a graceleſs unconverted condition?

I anſwer:

1. Warn them of the danger of a graceleſs unconverted condition; tell them, *That except they be converted, they cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Mat.* 18. 3. and that if they do not repent, they will moſt certainly periſh, & be caſt into everlaſting burnings, *Luk.* 13. 3. *Mat.* 13. 41, 42. And therefore warn them often of the danger of living and dying in an impenitent condition. Warn-

Warning persons of the danger and damnable nature of sin, is an effectual means to prevent their dying in their sins, and to bring them to repentance and salvation: 2 *Chron.*19.10. *Ye shall warn them that they trespass not against the Lord*: Ezek. 3. 21. *He shall surely live because he is warned*, Ezek. 33. 5. *He that taketh warning shall deliver his Soul.* If you find that after many warnings there is no amendment, yet cease not to warn them day after day, and year after year, and that with much tenderness, till you see some fruit of your labours, *Act.* 20. 31. *By the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*

2. Take all occasions to discourse with them about the things of God, especially of those things wherein you have formerly instructed them out of the Word of God. Good Discourse is a means of conveying Grace to those with whom we converse; *Ephes.*4.29. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister Grace to the Hearers.*

3. Reprove them when they do that which is contrary to the Will of God; and if Reproofs will not make them reform, joyn Correction with Reproof: Reproof and Correction are means of instilling grace into our Children: *Prov.*29.15. *The Rod and Reproof give Wisdom.*

4. Stir them up to consider their ways, how contrary they are to the Word of God, and what will be the fruit and effect of their sins, if they repent not. A serious consideration of our ways, is a means of leading us to repentance, *Psal.*119.59. *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies*: Ezek.18.28. *Because he considereth and turneth away from all his transgressions.*

5. Stir

5. Stir them up to read and meditate upon the Word of God, that may be a means of converting their Souls; *Psal.*19.7. *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul.*

6. Cauſe them to attend upon the Publick Miniſtry of the Word: The preaching of the Word is the uſual means of working Grace in our hearts, *Jam.*1.18. *Of his own Will begat he us with the Word of Truth,* Acts 10.44. *While Peter yet ſpake theſe words, the holy Ghoſt fell on all them which heard the Word.*

7. Exhort them to forſake ungodly company, and to walk and converſe with them that fear God, *Prov.* 9.6. *Forſake the fooliſh and live, and walk in the way of underſtanding:* Prov.13.20. *He that walketh with wiſe men ſhall be wiſe.*

8. Be earneſt with God to give them ſaving Grace: By prayer to God, we may obtain Grace for others, as well as for our own Souls: 1 *John* 5. 16: *If any man ſee his Brother ſin a ſin which is not unto death, he ſhall ask, and he ſhall give him life, for them that ſin not unto death.*

Secondly, If upon diſcourſing with your Families you find they profit by the Inſtructions you give them, and that they obey from the heart that Form of Doctrine which you deliver to them, and that they grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST: Then,

1. Be thankful to God for bleſſing your Labours, *Rom.*6.17. *God be thanked that ye were the Servants of ſin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of Doctrine which was delivered you.*

2. Love the Lord for cauſing your Family to flouriſh and proſper by thoſe inſtructions that you give them: *Cant.*7.11,12. *Come my Beloved,—let us go up early to the Vineyards, let us ſee if the Vine flouriſh,*

rish, whether the tender Grape appear, and the Pomegranates bud forth; there will I give thee my loves. Our Families may be compated to Vineyards; the Wife is resembled by the Psalmist to a Vine, and the Children to Olive-Plants, *Psal.* 128.3. The Governour of the Family is placed in this Vineyard as *Adam* was in *Eden*, to dress it and to keep it: Now such of us as are made keepers of Vineyards, should be often looking whether the Vine flourish, whether the tender Grape appear; and when we go about this work, we should call to CHRIST, to go with us, and assist us: And if we find any Grapes, though they be but tender; yea, if we perceive but any Buds, any thing that gives us hope of Fruit, we should give the Lord JESUS not only our love, but our loves; that is, we should love him abundantly; for 'tis He that gives a Blessing to our Labours; 1 *Cor.*3.6. *I have planted, Apollo watered, but God gave the increase.*

3. Exhort them to look to themselves, that they do not lose what you have by Gods Blessing wrought in them, that so neither you nor they may lose your Reward; 2 *John* 8. *Look to your selves, that ye lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we may receive a full Reward.* When Jesus saw some of the Jews believing, he exhorted and incouraged them to continue in his word; *John* 8. 30, 31. *As he spake these words, many believed on him; then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my Disciples indeed.*

4. Endeavour to make them more Fruitful. Thus God dealeth with his Children that bring forth fruit; he teacheth and helpeth them to bring forth more Fruit, *John* 15. 2. *Every Branch that beareth Fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more Fruit.*

The

The more fruitful any Christian is, the more glory he bringeth to God: verſ. 8. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.*

5. Direct them to the right end in bearing Fruit, which is not any ſelfiſh intereſt; for that Fruit which is brought forth for ſelfiſh ends, is in Gods account as good as none; *Hoſ.* 10.1. *Iſrael is an empty Vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himſelf.* The glorifying and pleaſing God, is that which we muſt aim at in our bearing fruit; *Rom.* 7.4. *That we ſhould bring forth fruit unto God.*

6. Endeavour that they may bring their fruit to perfection; and to that end, put them in mind that it is the will of God that we ſhould not only labour to be holy, but that we ſhould labour to perfect holineſs in the fear of God, 2 *Cor.* 7.1. And caution them againſt thoſe things which do hinder the ſeed of the Word from growing to perfection, as the cares of this life, pleaſures, unmortified luſts, *Luke* 8.14. *Mark* 4.19. Keeping company with men of corrupt minds and corrupt converſations, 1 *Cor.* 15.33. *Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners.* Giving heed to ſuch as teach falſe Doctrine, will endanger their overthrow, and prove deſtructive to them, 1 *Tim.* 4.1. *Now the Spirit ſpeaketh expreſly, that in the latter times ſome ſhall depart from the faith, giving heed to ſeducing Spirits*— Seducers are thoſe Foxes that ſpoil the Vine that hath tender Grapes, againſt whom the Church prays, *Cant.* 2.15. *Take us the Foxes, the little Foxes that ſpoil the Vines, for our Vines have tender Grapes.*

7. Counſel them well to conſider into what Families they diſpoſe themſelves, when God ſhall by his providence remove them out of your Family;

That they do not for the gaining of more wages, or easier work, put themselves into such Families where they shall have no instruction; lest that good Work which is begun in them cease, and come to nothing: While *Jehoash* was instructed, he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, 2 *Kings* 12. 2. *Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all his days, wherein Jehoiada the Priest instructed him:* But when *Jehoiada* that instructed him was dead, *Jehoash* fell into Idolatry, and other great sins: 2 *Chron.* 24. 17, 18, 19, 21.

8. If any of the Members of your Family do find that God hath done their Souls good by the Instructions that you have given them, counsel and exhort them by way of gratitude, if ever God shall give them Families, to teach and train up their Families in the knowledge of Gods Word.

Thirdly, If upon communing with your Families, you find they have gotten no good by those Instructions and godly Lessons which you have given them: Then,

1. Inform them what a great sin, and how dangerous it is, to enjoy great means of Grace, and to remain graceless and barren under them. *Heb.* 6. 7. 8. *The Earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God; but that which beareth Thorns and Bryars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.* Matth. 3. 10. *And now also the Ax is laid to the Root of the Trees, therefore every Tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and is cast into the fire.*

2. See whence their unprofitableness proceeds, whe-

whether the cauſe of it be in your ſelves, that you teach them things that are too high for them, or that you do not make things plain to their underſtandings, or that you do not teach them by your Example as well as Doctrine, or that yo do not water your Seed that you ſow, with your Prayers and tears, or that you teach them ſo ſeldom, or in ſuch a ſlight manner. Or whether the cauſe of their unprofitableneſs be in themſelves; as their not minding what you teach them, their forgetfulneſs, *&c.* And where-ever the ground of their unprofitableneſs lieth, endeavour to get it removed.

3. Direct them what means they ſhould uſe, that they may profit by what you teach them: as, 1. To look up to the Lord who alone can teach them to profit, *Iſa.*48.17. 2. To mingle the Word of God with faith, *Heb.*4.2. 3. To meditate often on thoſe things wherein they are inſtructed: Meditation on the Word of God will be a great help to their profiting both in knowledge and grace: 1 *Tim.*4.15. *Meditate on theſe things—that thy profiting may appear unto all.*

Fourthly, If upon diſcourſing with them, you find they reſt in a form of Godlineſs, and have only a notional knowledge of the word of God, without the ſavour and practice of thoſe Truths that you have taught them: Then,

1. Inform them that *knowledge without practice will never make them happy*: Joh.13.17. but will aggravate their *condemnation*, and cauſe God to beat them with many ſtripes, *Luk.*12.47. And that the *form of Godlineſs* will profit them nothing, but the life and power of Godlineſs will be *profitable for all things*, and give them an intereſt in all Gods promiſes, whether they concern *this life*, or *the life to come*, 1 *Tim.*4.8.

2. Direct them what means they ſhould uſe, that they may not only have a barren and unfruitful notional knowledge of the things of God, but that they may reliſh, favour and practiſe what they know. As namely, 1. Exhort them to get Faith, Temperance, Patience, Godlineſs, Brotherly Kindneſs, and Charity: The Apoſtle having ſpoken of theſe Graces, ſaith, (2*Pet.*1.8.) *If theſe things be in you, and abound, they make you that you ſhall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* 2. Exhort them to plead Gods Covenant, where God hath promiſed not only to put his Laws into our minds, that is, to give us the knowledge and remembrance of his will, but alſo to write them in our hearts; that is, to incline our wills to embrace, love, and obey his Laws; *Heb.*8.10. *I will put my Laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts.*

3. Stir them up to cry unto God who hath taught them to know his will, to encline their hearts to do his will, and to keep his Commandments: *Pſal.*119. 36. *Incline mine heart unto thy Teſtimonies: Pſal.*143. 10. *Teach me to do thy will.*

Fifthly, If you find any of your Family in a declining withering condition:

1. Warn them betimes of the evil of a decaying declining frame of ſpirit. The Church of *Epheſus* had many things for which Chriſt gives her great commendations, *Rev.* 2. 2, 3. yet having loſt her firſt love, he gives her a ſharp rebuke, verſ.4.

2. Exhort them to remember whence they are fallen, and to repent and do their firſt works, leſt God ſend ſome ſudden and ſore Judgment upon them, *Rev.*2.5.

3. Stir them up to act their faith upon ſuch promiſes where God hath promiſed to heal our backſli-

dings

dings and reſtore our ſouls, and to recover us from a decayed frame of ſpirit, by cauſing us to grow in grace; as, *Hoſ.*14.4,5. *I will heal their backſlidings, I will love them freely —I will be as the dew unto Iſrael, he ſhall be as the Lilly, and caſt forth his roots as Lebanon.* This promiſe is made unto *Iſrael*, that was fallen into great decay: Verſ. 1. *O Iſrael, thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity: Iſrael* was ſo far fallen, that God complains, *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf:* Yet to *Iſrael*, that was fallen thus low, God promiſeth to heal their back-ſlidings, and to love them freely, and to be as the dew to them, and to cauſe them to grow as the Lily.

Sect. 16.

Six Arguments for diligence in inſtructing our Families.

*Direct.*16. IF you would carry on the work of Family-Inſtruction with ſucceſs, ply it with diligence: Do not perform it in a ſlight, careleſs, cuſtomary manner, but ſet your hearts to it, and do it with all the skill and might that you have. The Lord doth not only command us to teach our Children the Scriptures, but he requireth us to do this work with diligence: *Deut.*6.7. *Thou ſhalt teach them diligently unto thy Children*——This work is a good work, and every good work muſt be followed with diligence: 1 *Tim.*5.10. *If ſhe have followed diligently every good work*: The Apoſtle ſpeaketh there of Widows; now if Widows, whoſe condition is oft attended with many difficulties and incumbrances, muſt follow every good work with diligence, how much more are they who have greater abilities and opportunities for doing good works, than deſolate

Widows, obliged to be diligent therein. We read of *David*, that when he prepared Materials to build the Temple, he did it with all his might; 1 *Chron.* 29.2. *I have prepared with all my might for the House of my God, the Gold for things to be made of Gold, and Silver for things of Silver.*—The building up of our Children and Servants a spiritual House for the Lord, is as great and acceptable a work as the building of the material Temple, and therefore we should set upon it with all our might. To quicken your diligence herein, consider

1. You know not how short a time you have to live with your Families, and you can do nothing for them when you are in the Grave; and therefore what you see necessary to be done for them by way of instruction before you die, do it with all your might; *Eccles.*9.10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.*

2. To set your hearts to this work, and do it with your might, is the way to prosper in what you take in hand; 2 *Chron.*31.21. *In every work that he began in the service of the House of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.*

3. There is a curse pronounced against them that do the work of the Lord negligently, *Jer.*28.10. *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully*, or (as it is in the Margin) *negligently.*

4. This work is to be done out of love to Jesus Christ, *John* 21.15. *Lovest thou me? Feed my Lambs.* Now our love to Christ must not be a cold and weak love, but such a love as must engage all our hearts and strengths in his service: Deut.6.5. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

5. Con-

5. Conſider how diligent Satan and wicked men are to do evil, and to draw others to ſin. Some wicked men are ſo eager of doing miſchief, that they cannot ſleep in the night, if they have done no miſchief in the day time: *Prov.*4.16. *They ſleep not except they have done miſchief, and their ſleep is taken away unleſs they cauſe ſome to fall.* *Solomon* deſcribeth the great diligence of Harlots to corrupt young men, *Prov.*7.12,13,15,21. *Now is ſhe without, now in the ſtreets, and lieth in wait at every corner, ſo ſhe caught him, and kiſſed him, and with an impudent face ſaid unto him,——Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to ſeek thy face, and I have found thee, &c. With much fair ſpeech ſhe cauſed him to yield, with the flattering of her lips ſhe forced him.* Satan is no leſs active and diligent than his Inſtruments to tempt to ſin, and deſtroy mens Souls, 1 *Pet.*5.8. And ſhall not this provoke us to uſe all diligence to do good, and to ſave their Souls that are under our charge?

6. After there is ſome good work wrought in their hearts, they will be in danger of falling into an hardned frame of Spirit, if we do not with great diligence inſtruct and exhort them to ſhun that which is evil, and to follow after holineſs. *Heb.*3: 12,13. *Take heed Brethren, leſt there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God: but exhort one another daily, whilſt it is called to day, leſt any of you be hardned through the deceitfulneſs of ſin.*

Sect. 17.

Seven Arguments to perſwade us to teach and watch over every Member of our Family.

Direct. 17. LEt your care and diligence in teaching and watching over your Families be extended to every perſon in the Family, the meaneſt and moſt ſimple, as well as the more knowing perſons. As Miniſters, ſo alſo Maſters of Families, muſt take heed to all their Flock, and not only to the principal Members thereof: *Acts* 20. 28. *Take heed therefore unto your ſelves, and to all the Flock over which the holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own Blood.*

To provoke you to be careful of every Member of your Family, even of the meaneſt Servant and Apprentice, as well as of your Children, and to ſeek after the Converſion, Edification, and Salvation of every one that the Lord hath committed to your Charge and Care: Conſider,

1. The Example of Chriſt; He was careful not to loſe one of thoſe Souls that were committed to him by his Father: *John* 17. 12. *While I was with them in the World, I kept them in thy Name: Thoſe that thou gaveſt me, I have kept; and none of them is loſt but the Son of Perdition.* It is true, *Judas* the Son of Perdition was loſt, but not through the want of Chriſts care, for *Judas* was inſtructed as well as the reſt, but through his own wicked and perverſe ſpirit.

2. The neglecting of any one perſon in the Family, may trouble and pollute the whole Family, and prove a very great hindrance to the good of the Family,

Family, *Eccleſ.*9.18. *One ſinner deſtroyeth much good.* Heb.12.15: *Looking diligently leſt any man fail of the Grace of God, leſt any Root of bitterneſs ſpringing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.*

3. The Soul of the meaneſt Servant is of more value than the whole world: *Mar.*8,36. and therefore ought to be minded and regarded above all worldly things.

4. God is ſo careful of that which we commit to his keeping, that he will loſe or neglect nothing that we commit to him. After we have committed our ſelves to God, he doth not only look after our perſons, but after every hair of our heads: *Matth.* 10.30. *The very hairs of your head are all numbred: Luc.* 21.17,18. *Ye ſhall be hated of all men for my Names ſake, but there ſhall not a hair of your head periſh.* And ſhall we neglect any of thoſe immortal Souls which the Lord hath committed to our keeping, when God is ſo careful of us, as to look after every hair of our heads?

5. The pooreſt and meaneſt perſons in the Family, that have the loweſt employment and weakeſt parts, may belong to the Election of Grace as well as thoſe that are of a higher degree; 1 *Co.*1. 27, 28. *God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and baſe things of the world, and things which are deſpiſed hath God choſen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.* And ſhall we think much to ſpend a little time and care for the ſaving of their Souls whom the great God hath made Objects of his Love and Care from all Eternity? We find that God looks after ſimple as well as wiſe men; *Pſal.*116.6. *The Lord preſerveth the ſimple*——And ſhall we think much to look after thoſe of whom the Lord himſelf taketh care?

6. It

6. It is the will of God that means ſhould be uſed for the ſaving of every mans Soul; that the leaſt as well as the greateſt, the young as well as the old, ſhould be brought to repentance, that ſo they may obtain ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt: *Matth.* 18.14. *It is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven that one of theſe little ones ſhould periſh:* 2 Pet. 3.9. *The Lord is not ſlack concerning his promiſe, (as ſome men count ſlackneſs) but is long-ſuffering to us-ward, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance.*

7. If any man have an hundred ſheep, and but one of them go aſtray, he doth not ſay, I have ninety and nine remaining with me, I will not trouble my ſelf to ſeek up that one ſheep that is gone from me; but he looks up his loſt ſheep, though it be but one, till he find it: *Luk.* 15.4. *What man of you having an hundred ſheep, if he loſe one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the Wilderneſs, and go after that which is loſt until he find it.* One man is of more value than all the ſheep in the World, *Matth.* 12.12. *How much then is a man better than a ſheep?* Suppoſe a man hath in his Family an hundred perſons, and ninety and nine of them ſhould be godly, and but one ſhould go aſtray, he ſhould not reſt ſatisfied that he hath ninety and nine in his Family truly gracious, ſo as to neglect that perſon that goeth aſtray, but ſhould uſe all diligence for the converting and ſaving of that one Soul that as yet remains in a ſinful periſhing Condition. And what I have ſaid of extending your Care and Diligence unto every Member of your Families, is to be underſtood as well of thoſe that ſojourn with you for a ſhorter Time, as of thoſe that do dwell conſtantly with you, For

as

as *Moses* said, in another case, *Numbers* 15. 16. *One Law and one Manner shall be for you, and for the Stranger that sojourneth with you.* The like may I say here, You should take one and the same care as well for them that sojourn with you, whilst they are with you, as for those that are constantly with you. It may be the Lord sent them under your Roof for a season, that you might instil those things into them that may do them good for ever.

Sect. 18.

Our Families must be kept from strife, and preserved in Love and Peace. The way how this may be done.

Direct. 18. CArry your selves peaceably, and endeavour to preserve all the Members of your Family in Love and Peace amongst themselves, otherwise the Instructions that you give them will do them little good. *Solomon* (who was the wisest of men) tells us, *Prov.* 11. 29. *He that troubleth his own House shall inherit the Wind:* That is, First, All his Labours and Endeavours will be fruitless, and come to nothing: Wind is taken oft times for that which is unprofitable and fruitless: as, *Job* 15. 2, 3. *Eccles.* 6. 16. *Isa.* 26. 18. Secondly, He shall inherit the Wind; that is, he shall have an unruly disordered Family: such as he shall not be any way able to govern, or to keep in any good order: Who can rule or keep in order the Wind? *John* 3. 8. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth:*

Where

Where there is ſtrife and contention, there is confuſion; and inſtead of good, all manner of evil; *Jam.*4.16. *Where envying and ſtrife is, there is confuſion, and every evil work.* The Lord hath promiſed to give his bleſſing, not to ſuch as live at variance, but to thoſe that live in love and peace: *Pſal.*133,1,3. *Behold how good and pleaſant it is for Brethren to live together in unity!* —— *For there the Lord commanded the bleſſing, even life for evermore.* The God of Love will dwell with thoſe that live in love and peace; 2 *Cor.* 13.11. *Be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace ſhall be with you:* 1 John 4.16. *God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* But ſuch as live in wrath and ſtrife, give place to and ſuffer the Devil to dwell in their hearts, *Epheſ.*4.26,27. *Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the Devil.*

If you ask,

What ſhould we do to prevent diſcord and contention, and to preſerve love and peace in our Families?

I anſwer:

1. Inſtruct them out of the word of God what a great evil it is to live in ſtrife and variance, that ſo they may fear this as well as other ſins. Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, are accounted amongſt the works of the Fleſh, and do as certainly exclude men from the Kingdom of Heaven, as Murder, Adultery, Idolatry, or any other ſins, *Gal.*5.19, 20,21. To ſow diſcord among Brethren, is reckoned up amongſt thoſe ſix things which the Lord hateth, and the ſeven things which are an abomination to him; *Prov.*6.16,19. Diſcord and ſtrife are contrary to Gods Nature, who is a God of Love and Peace,

Peace, and contrary to the Doctrine of the Gospel, Rom. 16.17.

2. Advise them to take heed of the occasions and beginnings of strife; and therefore when they feel any motions to strife or wrath, arising in their hearts, let them stifle those motions, before they break out into action; for wrath and strife are more easily kept down, than appeased after they are stirred up: *Prov.* 17. 14. *The beginnings of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention before it be medled with:* Prov. 18.19. *A Brother offended is harder to be won than a strong City, and their Contentions are like the bars of a Castle.*

3. Counsel them to be of an humble lowly spirit, to think and esteem better of others than themselves. This will prevent their contending one with another: *Prov.* 13.10. *Only by pride cometh contention.* Prov. 28.25. *He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife:* Phil. 2.3. *Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory:* How shall we attain to this, to do nothing through strife? The following words will resolve you; *But in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*

4. Exhort them to abstain from all provoking speeches, *Prov.* 15.1. *Grievous words stir up anger;* and from all provoking carriages one towards another, as scorning each other: Prov. 22.10. *Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out, yea strife and reproach shall cease.* A froward carriage that also kindleth strife. *Prov.* 15.18. *A wrathful man stirreth up strife, but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.* Talebearing is another evil that occasions much discord and contention: *Prov.* 26.20. *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out; so where there is no Talebearer, the strife ceaseth.* Those persons that do not

learn

learn to bridle their tongues, they will set the Families where they live at variance among themselves, and also with other Families, and not Families only, but kingdoms also; *Jam.* 3. 6. *The tongue is a fire.—A world of iniquity——and setteth on fire the course of Nature.*

5. Teach them to bear one with another, let the stronger bear with the weak; and when any ones passion is stirred, let the other seek to appease it by mild speeches and gentle carriage. It is not good to answer passion with passion, that will blow up the fire to a greater flame. But if either the Husband or Wife be angry, or one Servant be angry with his fellow-Servant, the way to assuage anger is to speak in a mild gentle manner to the person that is provoked; *Prov.* 15. 1. *A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger:* Prov. 25. 15. *By long forbearing, a Prince is perswaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.*

6. Admonish them to be of a self-denying yielding spirit, and not to be stiff, and self-willed, *Eccl.* 10. 4. *Yielding pacifieth great offences*: By this means *Abraham* prevented the strife that was like to have been between him and *Lot*, by receding from his own Right, and yielding to *Lot*, who was the younger, to make his choice which way he would go with his Flocks and Herds, *Gen.* 13. 8, 9, 10.

7. When any strife or contention doth arise, take up the difference that is between one party and another, and endeavour to reconcile each to other, and judge with equity and impartiality between him that doth, and him that suffereth the wrong. Thus *Moses*, when he saw two *Israelites* striving together, endeavoured to bring them to an agreement, *Acts* 7. 26. This is a blessed work to make peace, and there-

fore

fore though it be attended with ſome difficulties, we ſhould endeavour, as much as in us lieth, to make peace between ſuch as are at variance one with another, *Matth.*5.9. *Bleſſed are the Peace-makers, for they ſhall be called the Children of God.*

Sect. 19.

The neceſſity of joyning Prayer with Family-Inſtruction: The Caſe of ſuch as have prayed long for their Childrens Converſion, and ſee no anſwer of their prayers, conſidered.

*Direct.*19. IF you would carry on the work of Family-Inſtruction ſucceſsfully, ſo as to convert, edifie, and ſave their Souls which are under your Charge, you muſt pray with, and pray for your Families: you muſt pray often, and earneſtly to God in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, for guidance, aſſiſtance, and ſucceſs, in the management of this work. When the Apoſtles gave themſelves to prayer, and the miniſtry of the Word, great multitudes were converted to the Faith, *Act.*6.4,7. *We will give our ſelves continually to prayer, and to the Miniſtry of the Word:* And what followed hereupon? *The Word of God increaſed, and the number of the Diſciples multiplied in Jeruſalem greatly, and a great company of the Prieſts were obedient to the faith.*

To ſtir you up to give your ſelves unto prayer for aſſiſtance and ſucceſs in this work: Conſider,

1. All your ſufficiency for the right performing of this work, is of God: 2 *Cor.*2.16. *Who is ſufficient for theſe things?* 2 Cor.3.5. *Not that we are ſufficient of our ſelves to think any thing as of our ſelves, but our ſufficiency is of God.* And as our ſufficiency for

this work, so our success in it is from God, 1 *Cor.*3.6. *I have planted, Apollo watered, but God gave the increase.* *Paul* was an able Minister of the New Testament, 2 *Cor.*3.6. and *Apollo* was an eloquent man mighty in the Scriptures, *Act.*18.24. yet neither *Paul*'s Abilities, nor *Apollo*'s Eloquence could convert or edifie any, but where God gave a blessing to their Labours.

2. Consider how the Servants of Christ who have been Teachers of others, have longed and laboured with God in prayer night and day, for the conversion, edification and salvation of those that have been committed to their Care and Charge: *Phil.*1.8. *God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.* The Apostle had a longing desire after the sanctification and salvation of the *Philippians*; He did not only long, but longed *greatly*, not after some, or most of them, but after them *all*, and that in the *bowels of Christ*; that is, with such earnest and ardent desires as Jesus Christ hath towards the conversion of Sinners, and their eternal salvation; or, *In the Bowels of Christ Jesus*, may signifie those bowels, that tender and ardent affection which Jesus Christ had implanted in his soul: And what was it that the Apostle did thus long for on their behalf? It was, *that their love might abound more and more, in knowledge, and in all judgment, that they might approve the things that are excellent, that they might be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ, that they might be filled with the fruits of Righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God*, ver.9.10,11. How earnestly did the Apostle thirst after the conversion of the *Galatians*, Gal.4.9. *My little Children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you*: As it is with a travailing woman, she is full of sorrow and heavines

heavineſs, and cries out, and is pained, till ſhe be delivered: *John* 16. 21. *A woman when ſhe is in travail hath ſorrow*: Rev. 12. 2. *She being with Child cried, travelling in Birth, and pained to be delivered.* So it was with the Apoſtle, he wept, he cried out, he was pained, he could not be at eaſe untill Chriſt was formed in their hearts. This is a good pattern for Parents to follow, as ſoon as God hath given them Children, they ſhould travel in birth again, till Chriſt be formed in their Childrens hearts. The Apoſtle was ſo affectionately deſirous of the *Theſſalonians* welfare, that he could have imparted his own Soul to them: 1 *Theſ.* 2. 7, 8. *We were gentle among you, even as a Nurſe cheriſheth her Children, ſo being affectionately deſirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you not the Goſpel of God only, but alſo our own Souls, becauſe ye were dear unto us.* And as the Apoſtle did earneſtly longafter their welfare whom he inſtructed, ſo he prayed exceedingly for them night and day; 1 *Theſ.* 3. 10. *Night and day praying exceedingly that we might ſee your face, and perfect that which is lacking in your Faith*: Phil. 1. 4. *Always in every prayer of mine making requeſt for you all with Joy*: He put up no prayer at any time, but he remembred them all; and it was not irkſome to him ſo to do, but he did it with Joy.

And as the Apoſtle *Paul*, ſo alſo others of the Servants of Chriſt have been wont to labour and ſtrive mightily with God in Prayer for thoſe whom they have taught and inſtructed in the ways of God, *Col.* 4. 12. *Epaphras, who is one of you, a Servant of Chriſt, ſaluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may ſtand perfect and compleat in the whole Will of God.*

He did not only pray, but laboured in prayer, and that fervently, not ſometimes, but always; and that not for his own concernments, but for you: beſides, it is not ſaid in prayer, but in prayers; intimating that he put up a multitude of prayers for them; and it was no ſmall meaſure of grace that he laboured thus earneſtly for on their behalf, but that they might ſtand perfect and compleat in the will, in all the will of God.

3. Prayer will do great things with God for others, as well as our own Souls; *Jam.* 5. 16. *Pray one for another that ye may be healed; the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* By praying in faith, and with fervency, we may obtain converting grace, remiſſion of ſins, and eternal life, for our Children and Servants, and others, as well as thoſe of our own Families, 1 *John* 5. 16. *If any man ſee his Brother ſin a ſin which is not unto death, he ſhall ask, and he ſhall give him life for them that ſin not unto death.* This promiſe may give us great encouragement to pray in faith for the converſion and ſalvation of ſuch as are viſible and open ſinners. *If any ſee his Brother ſin,* &c. If we conſider,

1. The perſons to whom this promiſe is made, and they are every one that believeth in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt: It is not a priviledge that did belong only to the Apoſtles, or extraordinary men of God; but it is ſaid, *If any man*——that is, any man that believeth in Chriſt, as appeareth from the thirteenth verſe.

2. The perſons for whom Believers may obtain Life and Salvation upon praying to God for them, and they are his Brethren, ſinning Brethren, *If any man ſee his Brother ſin,—he ſhall give him life for them*— He firſt ſpeaks of a Brother in the ſingular number, and

and then ſaith, *Life for them*, in the plural, which ſhews that the word *Brother* is to be taken collectively (as *Beza* obſerves) for all or any Brother for whom a Believer ſhall pray to God. If you ask, Who is meant by a Brother? I anſwer: The Apoſtle ſeemeth to uſe the word *Brother* in this Epiſtle in the ſame latitude with *Neighbour*, which may be proved from ſeveral paſſages in his Epiſtle, as Chap. iii. 14, 15, 16. Chap. iv. 20. 21. And *Piſcator* expounds the word Brother, *Fratris nomine intelligit proximum, qui eandem nobiſcum fidem ac proinde eundem in cœlis patrem profitetur.*

3. He excepts no ſins but the ſin unto death; that is, as moſt expound the place, the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which is a ſin that ſhall never have forgiveneſs: As for any other ſins, if Believers ask of God Repentance and Forgiveneſs of ſins for them that have ſinned, that ſo they may have Life and Salvation, God will grant them their deſire.

Another Scripture that ſheweth the efficacy of prayer, in order to the obtaining for others forgiveneſs of ſins, and Grace whereby they may be qualified to receive forgiveneſs of ſins, we have *Jam.* 5. 15. *The prayer of faith ſhall ſave the Sick, and the Lord ſhall raiſe him up; and if he have committed ſins they ſhall be forgiven him. Iſhmael* was a wild Child, *Gen.* 16. 11, 12. yet when *Abraham* prayed, *Gen.* 17. 10. *O that Iſhmael might live before thee!* God anſwers him, verſe 20. *As for Iſhmael I have heard thee:* And though the Lord adds afterward, *But my Covenant will I eſtabliſh with Iſaac*; Yet this, as *Rivet* obſerves, ſeems rather to be an excluding of *Iſhmael's* Poſterity, than his Perſon, from the Covenant; unto whom, the ſame day that *God* gave him this anſwer, *Abraham* adminiſters *Circumciſion*, the

Seal of the Covenant. When the woman of *Canaans* Daughter was grievouſly vexed with a Devil, her prayer prevailed with Chriſt to deliver her Daughter from the power of the Devil, *Matth.*15. 22,28.

Objection.

I have prayed often to God to give my Children Grace, and to convert and turn them from their ſins; but I do not ſee that my Prayers avail any thing with God for my Children, they abide ſtill in a graceleſs condition.

Anſwer.

1. Do you inſtruct them diligently, as well as pray for them? Do you watch over them? Do you ſhew them a good example? Do you reprove them? Do you give them due correction? If you do not uſe other means as well as prayer, poſſibly that is the reaſon why your prayers avail not for their converſion. The Apoſtle *Paul* who earneſtly deſired and prayed for the ſalvation of the Jews, *Rom.*10.1. *Brethren, my hearts deſire and prayer to God for Iſrael is, that they might be ſaved*; joyned with his prayers the uſe of all means to effect their ſalvation; *Rom.* 11. 14. *If by any means I might provoke to emulation them which are my fleſh, and might ſave ſome of them.* So muſt we joyn the uſe of all other means with prayer, if we would have our prayers become effectual for the converſion and ſalvation of our Children.

2. Though we ſee no preſent return of our prayers, yet we ſhould continue praying, and not faint or be diſcouraged, until we have obtained what we pray for: *Luke* 18.1. *He ſpake a Parable unto them, to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.* Though the Lord may be ſilent for a ſeaſon, and ſeem not to regard our Prayers, to try our Faith

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and Patience, yet he may purpoſe to give us all that we pray for. He dealt thus with the Woman of *Canaan*, when ſhe came to him with a Requeſt on the behalf of her Daughter; at the firſt *he anſwered her not a word*, Matth. 15. 23. And when the Diſciples intercede for her, he ſeems to diſcourage them from making any farther requeſt for her, by ſaying to them, ver. 24. *I am not ſent but to the loſt ſheep of the Houſe of Iſrael*; and afterward, when ſhe continued to cry after him, he ſeemeth to beat her off, and reject her prayer, by telling her, Verſe 26. *It is not meet to take the Childrens Bread, and caſt it to Dogs*: Yet ſhe ſtill holding on her ſuit, at length Chriſt yields her the whole deſire of her heart, Verſe 28. *Then Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto her, O Woman, great is thy Faith; Be it unto thee even as thou wilt: And her Daughter was made whole from that very hour.*

3. If God ſhould not anſwer our Prayers for our Children whilſt we live, yet he may anſwer thoſe Prayers after we are dead, which we did offer up to him whilſt we lived with them. Our Lord JESUS CHRIST prayed for the Jews, that were ſo vile and wicked as to put him to death, *Luke* 23. 34. *Then ſaid Jeſus, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* And as an anſwer of Chriſts Prayer, thouſands of thoſe Jews that were not wrought upon either by Chriſts Doctrine, or Miracles, or Godly Life, but continued in an impenitent condition till after his death; yea, were ſo hardened as to have an hand in the crucifying of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord of Life and Glory, were notwithſtanding converted by the preaching of the Apoſtle *Peter*, Acts 2. 23. 37, 41.

Suppose neither your Instructions, nor godly Example, nor Prayers should prevail for the conversion of your Children whilst you live, but they should be vile, and stubborn, and disobedient to God and to you, unto your dying day; yet cease not praying for them: It may be the Lord will answer your prayers by making use of others to convert them, when you are laid in your Graves.

4. We should sin against God, if we should cease praying for our Children, because we see no effect of our Prayers, but do behold much stubbornes and perverseness in them. The people of *Israel* were a perverse people, *Samuel* saw little fruit of his Instructions or Prayers on their behalf, they were set upon their own way, and he could not dissuade them from desiring a change of Government, although therein they did not only reject *Samuel*, but God himself, from raigning over them, 1 *Sam.* 8. 5, 6, 7, 8. yet he would not cease from praying for them, lest he should sin against the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 12. 23. *Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you.* If *Samuel* was afraid to cease praying for a stubborn perverse people, lest he should sin against the Lord, ought not Parents to continue praying for their graceless and disobedient Children, for fear if they should cease to pray for them, they also should sin against the Lord?

5. If you have prayed for your Childrens Conversion, and cannot prevail, joyn fasting with prayer: Sometimes mercies cannot be obtained from God, unless we fast as well as pray, *Mark* 9. 29. *This kind can come forth by nothing but by Prayer and Fasting.* If we have a Child that is sick unto death, we do not stick at seeking God by Fasting

Faſting and Prayer for its Recovery: 2 *Sam.*12. 15,16. *The Lord ſtruck the Child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very ſick; David therefore beſought God for the Child, and David faſted.*—— And ſhall we not much more ſeek to God by faſting and prayer, to recover our Children and Servants from the power of ſin and Satan, and to deliver them from everlaſting Burnings? This duty of Faſting, rightly performed, is of great uſe, both for the obtaining direction from God in the management of our undertakings, *Ezra* 8.21,23. *I proclaimed a Faſt——that we might afflict our ſelves before our God, to ſeek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for our ſubſtance, ſo we faſted, and beſought our God for this, and he was intreated of us.* And alſo for procuring of ſucceſs in what we take in hand, as we may ſee in the caſe of *Eſther*, *Nehemiah*, and ſeveral others, who ſetting upon their undertakings with faſting and prayer, proſperouſly effected what they took in hand, though their work was very great, and attended with very great difficulties. God ſeldom lets any Faſt, that is performed in a right manner, go without a remarkable Reward, *Matth.*6.17,18. And therefore it will be very much for our own and our Families advantage, to ſet apart ſome days of humiliation, with our Families, to ſeek God by faſting and prayer to bleſs and ſucceed us in this Work of Family-Inſtruction.

SECT.

Sect. 20.

The uſefulneſs of Faith in reference to Family-Inſtruction. Several ſorts of Promiſes relating to our Families. The Caſe of ſuch as are diſcouraged from acting Faith upon the Promiſes, becauſe they ſee no Fruit of their Faith or Labours.

Direct. 20. ACT your Faith upon God for the Converſion and Salvation of ſuch as are under your charge. Truſt in him by vertue of his Promiſes to bleſs and proſper your Labours in teaching your Families. We read of *Iſaac* that he bleſſed his Children in faith, *Heb.* 11.20. *By faith Iſaac bleſſed Jacob and Eſau concerning things to come.* As *Iſaac* bleſſed his Children in faith, ſo ſhould we inſtruct our Children in faith, believing that God will bleſs our Inſtructions for the doing their ſouls good. To do our work in faith, believing in God, and reſting upon God for his bleſſing, is the way to proſper in what we do; 2 *Chron.* 20.20. *Believe in the Lord your God, ſo ſhall you be eſtabliſhed; believe his Prophets, ſo ſhall ye proſper.* By believing in the Lord, we may obtain ſalvation for our Houſhold, as well as for our own Souls, *Acts* 16.31. *Believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved, and thy Houſe:* Which is not to be underſtood as though the Governours faith would avail for the ſalvation of ſuch of his Houſe as live and die in an unregenerate condition; but that upon his believing, and uſing of the means of Grace in faith, he ſhall obtain converſion, and ſo conſequently ſalvation, for his Houſhold.

Wherefore ſeeing Faith is of ſuch prevalencie with God, as to obtain converting Grace and

and Salvation for our Families, I ſhall put you in mind of ſeveral ſorts of Promiſes which may encourage and help you to truſt in God for Family-Mercies and Family-Bleſſings; and that not only Temporal, but Spiritual and Eternal Bleſſings: As for inſtance:

1. God hath promiſed not only to be a God to his People, but alſo the God of their Families; *Jer.* 31. 1. *At the ſame time, ſaith the Lord, will I be the God of all the Families of Iſrael, and they ſhall be my People.*

2. The Lord hath promiſed to bleſs the ſeveral Members of his Peoples Families, as the Wife, the Children, the Servants. He hath promiſed to bleſs the Wife, and to make her as a fruitful Vine; *Pſal.* 128. 1, 2, 3. *Bleſſed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his ways; for thou ſhalt eat the labour of thy hands, happy ſhalt thou be, and it ſhall be well with thee: Thy Wife ſhall be as a fruitful Vine by the ſides of thine Houſe.*——

Now that we may underſtand what is couched under this phraſe, *Thy Wife ſhall be as a fruitful Vine*: Let us conſider what the Scripture ſaith of the Vine in other places:

The Vine brings forth Wine, which cheareth God and men, *Judg.* 9. 13.

It caſteth forth a pleaſant delightful ſmell, *Cant.* 2. 13.

To dwell under a Vine, implies ſafety and confidence, 1 *King* 4. 25. Alſo a dwelling in peace, without Wars, Jars, and Contentions, *Mich.* 4. 34.

The Vine hath no prickles on it, or any thing that may hurt a man, and is oppoſed to the pricking Briar and grieving Thorn, *Ezek.* 28, 24, 26.

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The Vine is fruitful, which is that which the Pſalmiſt mentions, *She ſhall be as a fruitful Vine*; and further he adds, *By the ſides of thine Houſe*; To ſhew that ſhe ſhall reſemble the nobleſt and choiceſt Vine. Men do not uſe to plant wild Vines by the ſides of their Houſes, ſuch as bring forth ſowr Grapes, but the beſt and choiceſt Vines that they can get, ſuch as yield ſweet and pleaſant fruit.

The Lord hath promiſed alſo to bleſs our Children with his Grace and good Spirit. He hath promiſed to be a God to our Seed, *Gen.*17.7. *I will eſtabliſh my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations, for an everlaſting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee*: And to give them his holy Spirit, *Iſa.*44.3. *I will pour water upon him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground*; *I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Bleſſing upon thine Off-ſpring.* He hath promiſed to circumciſe their hearts to love him in ſincerity and truth: *Deut.*30.6. *The Lord thy God will circumciſe thine heart, and the heart of thy Seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and all thy Soul, that thou mayeſt live.* He hath promiſed that our Children ſhall be like Olive plants, *Pſal.*128.3, *Thy Children like Olive Plants round about thy Table*: By which we may underſtand (as *Mollerus* obſerves upon this Text) that Children ſhall be Comforts and Ornaments to their Parents; (for Oil is uſed to ſignifie joy and gladneſs, *Pſal.*45.7. and was uſed by the Jews by way of Ornament and Beauty, *Pſal.* 104. 15. *Luke* 7.46.) And alſo that they ſhall be furniſhed with the Gifts and Graces of Gods Spirit, (which are compared to Oyl, *Matth.*25.3,4,8.) And that they ſhall be uſeful Inſtruments to do ſervice for God in their Generation, either in the Church or State,

(*Zach.*

(*Zach.*4.12,13,14.) And be of a quiet, peaceable diſpoſition; for the Olive is uſed as an Emblem of Peace, *Gen.*8.11. And that they ſhall be of an heavenly diſpoſition, reſembling the holy Cherubims. (When *Solomon* made Cherubims within the Oracle, he made them of the Olive-Tree, 1 *King.* 6.23.) Laſtly, By this Metaphor may be ſignified their conſtant progreſs and perſeverance in Grace and Holineſs all their days; (the Olive continuing full of green Leaves all the year long, *Pſal.*52.8.) The Lord hath promiſed alſo to give his Grace and good Spirit unto our Servants, *Joel* 2.28,29. *I will pour out my Spirit upon all Fleſh,— and alſo upon the Servants, and upon the Handmaids in thoſe days will I pour out my Spirit.*

3. God hath promiſed to bleſs his Peoples Families with peace, and to prevent Jars and Diſcords, which are a great hindrance to the good of a Family, and that he will help them to govern their Families in a holy manner, *Job* 5.24. *Thou ſhalt know that thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace, and thou ſhalt viſit thy Habitation and ſhalt not ſin.*

4. God hath promiſed to give his People flouriſhing Families, by which we are not only or chiefly to underſtand their flouriſhing in reſpect of outward proſperity, but rather their flouriſhing in reſpect of the abundance of heavenly and ſpiritual Bleſſings, wherewith the Lord will bleſs them: *Prov.* 14. 11. *The Houſe of the Wicked ſhall be overthrown, but the Tabernacle of the Upright ſhall flouriſh.*

5. The Lord hath promiſed to bleſs his People in every work of their hands, and to proſper them therein, and ſo conſequently in this work of Family-Inſtruction: *Deut.*15.20. *The Lord thy God ſhall bleſs thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteſt thine hand*

hand unto. Iſa.65.22,23. *Mine Elect ſhall long enjoy the work of their hands: They ſhall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the Seed of the bleſſed of the Lord, and their Off-ſpring with them.*

Thus we ſee there are variety of Promiſes for us to act our faith upon, in reference to our Families.

But it may be ſome will be ready to ſay,

I ſee all things in my Family running croſs to theſe Promiſes; My Children are not Olive-Plants, but rather like Bryars and Thorns: I can ſee no fruit of my Labours either upon my Children or Servants: Inſtead of knowing that my Tabernacle ſhall be in peace, I find Jars and Diſcords ariſing daily; Inſtead of flouriſhing, I find withering and decaying; I find luke-warmneſs and deadneſs growing upon my Family, and therefore I finding all things running contrary to theſe Promiſes, I know not how to reſt upon God for bleſſing, converting, ſanctifying, and ſaving of the Members of my Family.

1. If you find God with-holding Family bleſſings, and that he doth not accompliſh Family-promiſes, enquire into the cauſe why God deals thus with you; and to that end let me put to you theſe following Queries:

1. Do you not harbour ſome unmortified ſins in your hearts? Is there not ſome evil in the managing of your Callings, or in your Converſations, which cauſeth God to with-hold theſe good things from you? *Jer.5.25. Your iniquities have turned away theſe things, & your ſins have with-holden good things from you.*

2. Are you careful and diligent to obey the Voice of the Lord? If not, that may be the reaſon why you do not enjoy theſe promiſed mercies, *Zach.6.15. And this ſhall come to paſs, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God.*

3. Do

3. Do you get up betimes that you may have opportunity to pray with and pray for your Family, do you pray hard, and cry mightily to God for them? Do you labour to purifie your ſelves as God is pure? Do you walk uprightly? If you would do thus, God would ſoon make your Families flouriſh, *Job* 8. 5, 6. *If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God betimes, and make thy ſupplications unto the Almighty, if thou wert pure and upright, ſurely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy Righteouſneſs proſperous.*

4. Are you diligent in teaching your Families? Do you ſet your hearts, your whole hearts to this work? You ought to do it if you would proſper in it; 2 *Chron.* 31.21. *In every work that he began in the ſervice of the Houſe of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandment, to ſeek his God, he did it with all his heart, and proſpered.*

5. Are you not deficient in the duty of Meditation? If ſo, poſſibly that may be the reaſon why God blaſts your Labours, for the promiſe of ſucceſs is made to ſuch as meditate on Gods word, *Joſh.* 1. 8. *This Book of the Law ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou ſhalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayeſt obſerve to do according to all that is written therein, for then thou ſhalt make thy way proſperous, and then thou ſhalt have good ſucceſs.*

6. Do you apply theſe promiſes to your ſelves, and believe in God, that he will give you the good things that are wrapped up in theſe promiſes? If not it is your unbelief that hinders your reaping the benefit of theſe Promiſes: For if you did believe them, they ſhould be performed in *due ſeaſon*: Luk. 1.45. *Bleſſed is ſhe that believeth, for there ſhall be a performance of thoſe things which were told her from the Lord.*

7. Are

7. Are you not in a backslidden condition? And is not your forsaking of God, the cause why God forsakes you, and gives no blessing to your Labours? 2 *Chron.*24.20. *Thus saith the Lord, Why transgress ye the Commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you.*

Secondly, Though you do not see the promises which relate to your Families accomplished, but all things seem rather to run contrary to them, yet you must not give over hoping in them, and waiting for them. After God had promised *Abraham* a numerous Seed, it was twenty five years before *Isaac* was born; for he was but seventy five years old when he departed out of *Charan*, which was the time God promised to make of him a great Nation, *Gen.* 12. 2, 3, 4. *And Abraham was an hundred years old when his Son Isaac was born unto him*, Gen. 21.5. It was so long before this promise began to have any accomplishment, that if he had considered the deadness of his own Body, or the deadness of *Sarah*'s Womb, as the Apostle speaks, *Rom.*4.19. natural Reason would have told him it was a vain thing for him to hope for Children: But *Abraham* having a promise of God to ground his faith upon, *believed in hope against hope, and did not stagger at the Promise through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God*, verse 18,20. Suppose you have waited for the Promises that relate to your Families twenty years, and see nothing of them made good, suppose you see nothing in your Children or Servants to encourage you to hope, but rather many discouragements; yet having promises to ground your Faith and Hope upon, you must imitate *Abraham*, who against hope believed in hope that it should be according to what was

spoken

ſpoken and promiſed by God; you muſt not ſtagger at the Promiſes through unbelief, but continue ſtrong in faith, and thereby you ſhall give glory to God: We are oft-times admoniſhed that we have need of Patience as well as Faith, to wait for the accompliſhment of the Promiſes; as we may ſee *Heb.* 10.35,36. *Caſt not away your confidence, which hath great recompence of Reward: for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God ye might receive the promiſe:* Heb.6,12. *That ye be not ſlothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the Promiſes.*

Thirdly, That Promiſe in *Hoſ.*14.7. *They that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall return, they ſhall revive as the Corn, they ſhall grow as the Vine, the ſcent thereof ſhall be as the Wine of Lebanon*, may be of great uſe to ſuch godly perſons as find their Families to be in a languiſhing condition, ſome unconverted, others that gave hope of a work of grace wrought in them, declined and gone backward, deadneſs and unprofitableneſs upon moſt of the Members of the Family. And therefore I ſhall open the promiſe, and ſhew how we ſhould come to enjoy the bleſſings that are contained in it.

The Lord having promiſed ſeveral bleſſings to his people, verſe 4,5,6. doth promiſe verſe 7. to make them bleſſings to others; *They that dwell under his ſhadow*—— hat is, under *Iſrael*'s ſhadow, mentioned verſ.5. By *Iſrael*, underſtand all the ſervants of God, *Iſa.*44.21. To dwell under ones ſhadow, may ſignifie to be in the ſame Houſe or Family, as *Gen.*10.8. *Only unto theſe men do nothing, for therefore came they under the ſhadow of my Roof*; that is, into my Family, or my Houſe. So that this Promiſe, though it be of a larger extent than particular Families, may be

safely and warrantably applied by every *Israelite* indeed who hath a Family, in reference to all that dwell under his Roof.

Now let us see what is promised concerning those that dwell under a godly mans shadow:

1. *They shall return*——Returning is sometimes applied to the Repentance and Conversion of such as are in a state of sin; as *Isa.* 55. 7. Sometimes to the returning of such as have backslidden from God after Conversion, as *Jer.* 3. 22. Both may be understood here; the impenitent and unconverted shall be converted to God, and such as are backslidden since their Conversion, shall be brought back again to the Lord.

2. *They shall revive as the Corn*: They, that is, they that dwell under *Israels* shadow *shall revive*——God will take off their deadness, and give them living and lively spirits in his service: *They shall revive as the Corn*: How is that? The Corn lies dead under the ground for a time, before it comes up; and after it is sprung up, winter-frosts and cold winds make it hang the head, as if it would dye again; yet by the warm beams of the Sun, and the blessing of Heaven, it revives again. Are there any in your Families where the Seed of the word seemeth to lie dead, nothing springs forth as yet, that speaketh life? Are there others where there did once appear some fruit, but it seems to be withered? Here is ground for faith to act upon for both sorts in these words, *They shall revive as the Corn.*

3. *They shall grow as the Vine*: Here is promised to the Members of our Families, 1. Growth in Grace: 2. Growth resembling the growing of the Vine: How is that? The cutting and pruning of the Vine makes it thrive, and grow more fruitful,

and

and ſo it ſignifieth a growing under afflictions and temptations; loſſes and croſſes ſhall not hinder but further their growth: Again, they ſhall grow as the Vine; not as Briars and Thorns; they ſhall not grow worſe and worſe, but grow in grace and goodneſs. We may know what we muſt do to obtain theſe bleſſings for our Families mentioned in this promiſe, if we conſider what God required of *Iſrael*, and what he promiſed to do for *Iſrael* before he gave *Iſrael* this promiſe, *They that dwell under his ſhadow*, &c. As,

1. We muſt repent of all our ſins, and return to the Lord; this God requireth from *Iſrael*, verſ. 1. *O Iſrael, return to the Lord thy God*: When we our ſelves return to God, God promiſeth to bleſs us with reformed Families, *Job* 22.23.

2. We muſt pray earneſtly to God to be gracious to us and our Families, and to take away all iniquity from us, this alſo is required of *Iſrael*, verſ. 2. God expects that his Promiſes ſhould be ſued out with prayer before he perform them, *Ezek.* 36.37.

3. We muſt renounce all ſelf-confidence, and acknowledge our inability to do good either to our ſelves or Families, verſ. 3.

4. If we have been under any backſlidings, we muſt get them healed, verſ. 4.

5. We muſt labour to grow in grace our ſelves, and to be of ſavoury ſpirits, to expreſs the beauty of holineſs in our Converſations, if we would have our Families grow in grace: For before God promiſeth that ſuch as dwell under *Iſrael's* ſhadow ſhould grow as the Vine, he promiſeth, verſ. 5, 6. to be as the dew unto *Iſrael*, whereby he ſhould grow as the Lily, and that his ſmell ſhould be as *Lebanon*, and his beauty as the Olive-Tree.

Sect. 21.

A godly Life and good Example maketh Family-Instruction powerful and successful.

Direct. 21. IF you would carry on the work of Family-Instruction successfully, walk examplarily in your Families: Be Patterns and Examples to them in Faith, in Holiness, in Meekness, in Charity, in good Discourse, in Self-denial, in Patience, in Heavenly-mindedness, and in every other good work, that your Families may know how to walk so as to please and glorifie God, by seeing and observing how you carry your selves in all things. They that teach others should labour to carry themselves exemplarily in all things towards those whom they instruct: 1 *Tim.* 4. 12. *Be thou an example of the Believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity:* Tit. 2. 7. *In all things shewing thy self a Pattern of good works.*—— Instruction from a good man is embraced more readily, and worketh more powerfully than that which comes from one that walketh contrary to what he teacheth. *Barnabas* being a good man was instrumental by his exhortations to convert many to the Lord, *Acts* 11. 23, 24. *He exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord; for he was a good man, and full of the holy Ghost, and of Faith, and much People was added to the Lord.* When *Levi*, who taught the people, walked with God, he turned many from iniquity, *Mal.* 2. 6. *The Law of Truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: He walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity:* A good conversation is such a powerful means to convert Souls, that some who are not wrought

wrought upon by the Word, are won to Chriſt by a good converſation; 1 *Pet.* 3. 1. *Wives be in ſubjection to your own Husbands, that if any obey not the word, they alſo may without the word be won by the converſation of the Wives.* When Governours of Families return to God, and walk with God, the Lord hath promiſed that their families ſhall be reformed alſo and put away iniquity, *Job* 22. 23. *If thou return to the Almighty, thou ſhalt be built up; thou ſhalt put away iniquity far from thy Tabernacles:* This latter clauſe implies two things, 1. That it is our duty when we return to God, to endeavour to reform our Families. 2. That when we do return to God, and endeavour to reform our Families, God will ſo bleſs our endeavours, that iniquity ſhall be put far from our Tabernacles. And accordingly we find that when the Maſter of the Family feareth God, and doth according to his duty labour to bring his Family to fear and ſerve the Lord, the Lord hath bleſſed the whole Family with the fear of his Name; as we may ſee in *Cornelius*, who fearing God, and being a devout man, all his houſe feared God alſo, *Acts* 10. 1, 2. And when *Criſpus* the chief Ruler believed, all his houſe believed alſo in the Lord, *Acts* 18. 8. *Criſpus the chief Ruler of the Synagogue believed on the Lord with all his Houſe.*

Sect. 22.

Family-Inſtruction muſt be continued as long as we live.

Direct. 22. COntinue conſtant and diligent in this work of Family-Inſtruction as long as you live, notwithſtanding all the diſcouragements that you meet with therein. The Lord doth not only require of us that we ſhould teach our Children his holy Word, but he commands us alſo to continue

so doing as long as we live, *Deut.*4.9. *Only take heed to thy self, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life, but teach them thy sons, and thy sons sons.* So also verse.10. *Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their Children.* To move you to constancy herein, consider,

1. That continuance in this work will be a means to promote your own and your Families salvation: 1 *Tim.*4.16. *Take heed unto thy self, and unto thy Doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this, thou shalt save thy self, and them that hear thee:* Isa.64.5. *In those is continuance, and we shall be saved:* That is, by continuing to work Righteousness, and to walk in Gods ways, (spoken of in the fore-going words) we shall be saved. It is not enough to do well, but we must continue with patience in well doing under all our discouragements, if we would have eternal life, *Rom.*2.6,7. *Who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal Life.*

2. Consider how earnestly God calls upon you not to be discouraged in the doing of any good work; but to be stedfast and unmovable, and to abound always in the work of the Lord, *Gal.*6.9. *Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not:* 1 Cor. 15. 58. *My beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord: forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

3. Consider how the Lord commends constancy

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in that which is good, *Gal.* 4.18. *It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.*——And what a great sin it is to neglect doing good works, *Jam.* 4. 17. *To him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin.* To leave off doing good works, is the way to run into all evil; *Psal.* 36.3,4. He *hath left off to be wise, and to do good; he deviseth mischief upon his Bed, he setteth himself in a way that is not good.* To leave off doing good works, will provoke God to send some heavy Judgment upon us, *Hos.* 8. 3. *Israel hath cast off the thing that is good, the Enemy shall pursue him.*

CHAP. IIII.

Objections againſt inſtructing our Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures according to the fore-mentioned Directions, anſwered.

I Shall in the next place anſwer the moſt material Objections that are or may be made againſt Parents or Maſters of Families inſtructing their Children and Servants in the knowledge of the Scriptures: In doing whereof, I ſhall remove the principal Diſcouragements that may keep any perſon either from entring upon, or continuing conſtant in this work of Family-Iuſtruction.

SECT. I.

The Plea of ſuch as neglect Family-Inſtruction, becauſe they ſay they are not able to inſtruct their Families, anſwered.

Object. 1. *I Would inſtruct my Family in the knowledge of the Scriptures, according as you have directed, if I were able to do it; but the work is difficult, and I am a man of mean abilities: I have but little*

tle acquaintance with the Scriptures, I have need to be taught my ſelf, and how then can I teach my Family? It is nothing but want of ability that hinders and diſcourageth me from ſetting upon this work.

Anſwer: Firſt, Let not your own weakneſs, or the difficulty of the work, keep you from ſetting upon it: For,

1. It is a work that God calleth you to do, as you may ſee *Deut.6.7. Epheſ.6.4.* And the plea of inability is not a ſufficient excuſe for neglecting the work to which you are called of God. When God called *Jeremiah* to be a Prophet, he would have excuſed himſelf by pleading his inability, *Jer.1.6. Ah Lord! behold I cannot ſpeak, for I am a Child.* Did God accept of this excuſe? No, but reproves him, and tells him he ſhould go where-ever he ſent him, and ſpeak whatever he commanded him, although he looked upon himſelf as unable as a Child for the work he was called to, Verſ.7. *But the Lord ſaid unto me, Say not that I am a Child, for thou ſhalt go unto all that I ſhall ſend thee, and whatſoever I command thee thou ſhalt ſpeak.* When God called *Moſes* to go and ſpeak to *Pharaoh* to let the people of *Iſrael* go out of *Egypt*, he would have refuſed, and pleads his unfitneſs, becauſe he was not eloquent, but of a ſlow ſpeech, *Exod.4 10. Moſes ſaid unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor ſince thou haſt ſpoken unto thy Servant, but I am ſlow of ſpeech, and of a ſlow tongue.* But what did God ſay? He refuſed this plea, and commandeth him to go about his work, verſ.11,12. *And the Lord ſaid unto him, Who hath made mans mouth? Or who maketh the Dumb or Deaf, or the Seeing, or the Blind? Have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou ſhalt ſay.*

2. God

2. God can do great things by weak means, and and therefore your weakneſs ſhould not deter you from this work, *Pſal.*8.2. *Out of the mouth of Babes and Sucklings haſt thou ordained ſtrength, becauſe of thine Enemies, that thou mighteſt ſtill the Enemy and the Avenger:* 1 Cor.1.27,28. *God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world to confound the wiſe, and God hath choſen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and baſe things of the world, and things which are deſpiſed, hath God choſen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.*

3. God will be with you in this work, and that may ſtrengthen you to ſet upon it, though the work be great, and your ſtrength be ſmall: *Hag.*2.4. *Be ſtrong all ye people of the Land, ſaith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* The Jews complained they were not able to build, *Neh.*4.10. but to take off this plea, God promiſeth them his preſence and aſſiſtance, as that which was ſufficient to ſtrengthen them for that difficult work which they complained they were not able to go on withall; *Be ſtrong and work, for I am with you.* What *David* ſaid to *Solomon*, when he had a great work to do, and might be diſcouraged becauſe he was young, and unable for ſuch great ſervice, 1 *Chron.*22.5,16. *Ariſe and be doing, and the Lord be with thee,* (or as *Junius* and *Piſcator* render the words) *the Lord will be with thee.* So may I ſay unto you, Let not your unfitneſs for this work keep you from it, but ariſe and be doing, and the Lord will be with you. You may be ſure the Lord will be with you in teaching and inſtructing your Families, for he commandeth you to do this work, as I have already ſhewn you out of *Deut.*6.6,7. and ſeveral other Scriptures: And you need not doubt of having Gods preſence in every work

work and ſervice which he commands you to do, *Joſh.*1.9. *Have not I commanded thee? Be ſtrong, and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou diſmayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee, whitherſoever thou goeſt.*

4. Although your abilities be but ſmall, yet if you teach and inſtruct your Families according to the ability which God hath given you, you ſhall by ſo doing glorifie God, 1 *Pet.*4.10,11. *As every man hath received the gift, even ſo miniſter the ſame one to another*——*If any man miniſter, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jeſus Chriſt.*

5. By improving thoſe mean abilities which God hath given you in teaching your Families, you ſhall have them increaſed, *The way of the Lord is ſtrength to the upright, Prov.*10.29. The man that had but two Talents, trading with them gained other two, *Matth.*25:17.

6. He that hath but very little and mean abilities, if he improve thoſe ſmall abilities faithfully, in the place and ſphear that God hath ſet him in, ſhall have a great Reward from God, as well as they that have had greater abilities; *Luke* 19. 17. *Well, thou good ſervant, becauſe thou haſt been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten Cities.*

Secondly, Difficult works will be carried on ſucceſsfully by weak means, where there is a willing mind. The building of *Jeruſalem*, after it had lain waſte ſeventy years, was a hard work; the ſtrength and eſtates of the Jews were much impaired by their long captivity. Their Adverſaries ſcoffed at them, thinking they went about an impoſſible thing, when they endeavoured to build up the wall of the City, and ſaid, *Neh.*4.2,3. *What do theſe feeble Jews? Will they*

they fortifie themselves? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of Rubbish which are burnt? Even that which they build, if a Fox go up, he shall even break down their stone Wall. And not only their Adversaries, but many of the Jews themselves thought they were unable to carry on this work, vers. 10. *And Judah said, The strength of the Bearers of Burdens is decayed, and there is much Rubbish, so that we are not able to build the wall.* Yet when they went to it with a willing mind, the work went on prosperously, vers. 6. *So built we the wall, and all the wall was joyned together unto the half thereof; for the People had a mind to work.* It argueth a slothful spirit to desist from our duty, because there are some difficulties attend it: *Prov.* 26. 13. *The slothful man saith, There is a Lion in the way, a Lion in the streets.* Get but a willing mind, and then this work will not be difficult, but easie and delightful.

Thirdly, The Apostle acknowledgeth that the Hebrews had but little knowledge, he saith of them, *Heb.* 5. 12. *When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the Oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat:* Yet he calls upon these persons whom he confesseth had need of teaching themselves, to exhort one another daily, Chap. 3. 13. *Exhort one another daily, while it is called to day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

Fourthly, Though some have more Talents than others, yet there is no man without a Talent to trade withal, *Matth.* 25. 15. The Apostle telleth us, *Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that,* 1 Cor. 7. 7. Now suppose your gifts are of the meanest sort, you must improve them

them for the good of your Families. That man who had but one Talent, becauſe he hid it in a Napkin, was caſt into outer darkneſs, where there is weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth, *Matth.*25.24,25, 28,30.

Fifthly, If your want of abilities diſcourage you from this work, ſeek to have your abilities increaſed; it is lawful to covet gifts for the edification of others, as well as grace for the good of your own ſoul: 1 *Cor.*12,31. *Covet earneſtly the beſt gifts*: 1 *Cor.* 14.1. *Deſire ſpiritual gifts.*

If you ask,

How you ſhould get your Gifts and Abilities increaſed?

I anſwer:

1. Pray to God to endue you with ſuch gifts as may fit you for the work and ſervice of the place and ſtation that he hath ſet you in; *Jam.*1.17. *Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights*——And he which is the Author of every good gift, will deny no good thing to them that ſeek him, *Pſal.* 34.10. *Matth.*7. 11. Though you have little or no abilities, yet God can put power into thoſe that have no might, *Iſa.*40. 29. *He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he encreaſeth ſtrength.*

2. Study the Scriptures, and other good Books, but the Scriptures above all other Books; read them diligently, and meditate upon them: Hereby you ſhall be enabled to inſtruct your Families, and be furniſhed with abilities for every good work, 2 *Tim.* 3.16,17.

3. Imploy thoſe abilities which God hath given you in teaching your Families, thereby you ſhall have them increaſed, *Matth.*25.29. *Unto every one that*

that hath (that is, who improveth what he hath, as appeareth from the context) *ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance.*

4. Walk in the fear of God; by ſo doing the Lord will increaſe both the gifts and graces of his Spirit in you: *Pſal.*115.13,14. *He will bleſs them that fear the Lord both ſmall and great. The Lord ſhall encreaſe you more and more, you and your Children.*

5. Look unto Chriſt who hath received Gifts to beſtow upon the ſons of men, *Pſal.*68.18. The *Corinthians* were endued with excellent Gifts, they were inriched with all utterance and all knowledge, ſo that they came behind other Churches in no gift. And how came they to be thus inriched in gifts? They had all their gifts from Jeſus Chriſt, as you may ſee 1 *Cor.*1.4,5,7.

Sixthly, Though your gifts be ſmall, yet if you be diligent, and do the beſt you can, God will accept your work. They that offered for the Tabernacle Goats Hair and Rams Skins, were accepted, as well as they that offered Gold, and Silver, and precious Stones; *Exod.*35.5,6,7,8. Such as could not bring a Lamb for a Treſpaſs-offering, were permitted to bring two Turtle Doves, or two young Pigeons, and ſuch as could not do this, were allowed to bring the tenth part of an Ephah of fine flower, and he that brought the ſmalleſt offering was accepted, as well as he that brought the greateſt, if he could bring no better; *Lev.*5.6,7,11,13. God hath always ſhewed himſelf ready to accept of weak ſervice, where a man hath a willing mind to do better, but wants ability, 2 *Cor.*8.12. *If there be firſt a willing mind it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.*

Seventh-

Seventhly, If you ſay you know not how, or in what way to teach your Children and Servants the holy Scriptures; you may, if you are not provided of a better help, make uſe of the Scriptural Catechiſm which I have publiſhed with this Treatiſe; wherein I have ſelected ſuch Texts of Scripture as are uſeful for the grounding of younger perſons in the knowledge and belief of the Articles of our Faith, and to bring them acquainted with their ſinful and miſerable condition by nature, the neceſſity of Regeneration, the Covenant of Grace, the way to obtain peace with God, and remiſſion of ſins, *&c.* and direct and perſwade them to embrace a godly life, and draw them on to the practiſe of Repentance, the love of God and our Neighbour, ſelf-denial, contentment, *&c.* and to reſtrain them from lying, ſwearing, the love of pleaſure, idleneſs, uncleanneſs, and ſuch other ſins as young perſons are apt to be led into; and alſo to prepare them for, and comfort them under ſuch afflictions as they are liable unto: Which I have endeavoured to digeſt in ſuch a method, and with that ſubſerviency each unto other, as may be helpful both to their Underſtandings and Memories, and alſo work upon their Affections.

Sect. 2.

The Plea of ſuch as cannot read, anſwered.

Object. 2. *NEither I my ſelf, nor any of my Family can read, and how then can I inſtruct them in the Scriptures, when neither I nor any in my Family can read the Scriptures?*

Anſwer: Firſt, Bewail your ſin, in neglecting to learn to read your ſelf, and in neglecting to cauſe your

your Children to learn to read the word of God. When St. *John* ſaw a Book that no man was able to look into, it made him weep much, *Rev.* 5.4. *I wept much, becauſe no man was found worthy to open and to read the Book, neither to look thereon.* Ought not you in like manner to weep much, becauſe neither you nor any of your Family is able to read in the Book of God?

Secondly, If you cannot read, learn to read with all ſpeed and diligence, and cauſe all in your Family to learn alſo to read the Scriptures. Though you be growing old, yet it is not too late to begin to learn to read Gods word. To ſtir you up to learn to read, and to cauſe your Children and Servants to learn to read, conſider,

1. It is the Command of God that we ſhould read his word with great diligence, *John* 5.39. *Search the Scriptures*——1 *Tim.* 4.13. *Give attendance to reading:* Iſa. 34.16. *Seek out of the Book of the Lord, and read*——1 *Theſ.* 5.27. *I charge you by the Lord that this Epiſtle be read unto all the holy Brethren.* Now they that cannot read live in the breach of theſe Commandments; and their inability to read, will be no excuſe to them at the day of Judgment, for they might have learnt if they would have taken a little pains herein.

2. There is a bleſſing promiſed to them that read the word, provided that they practice what they read, *Rev.* 1.3. *Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this Prophecy, and keep thoſe things which are written therein.*

3. It is a ſign they have little or no love to, or eſteem of the word of God, who do not learn and teach their Children to read it.

4. The want of ability to read, is uſually accompanied

panied with very groſs ignorance of God, and the myſteries of ſalvation.

Thirdly, If you cannot read, be ſwift to hear Gods word, and get your Neighbours to read to you, and labour to retain in your memories what you have heard others read, and teach that to your Families which God helps you to carry away in your memories.

Sect. 3.

The Plea of ſuch as neglect Family-Inſtruction becauſe they have diſordered Families, anſwered.

Object. 3. *MY Family is not well inclined, my Children and Servants are rude, looſe, and diſorderly: If I had a Family as well ordered as ſome of my Neighbours, I ſhould be very willing to teach and inſtruct them: It is the want of good inclinations and good order in my Family, that keeps me from ſetting on this work.*

Anſw. 1. If your Families are not well inclined, but looſe and diſorderly, they have the more need of inſtruction, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 14. *Now we exhort you Brethren, warn thoſe that are unruly:* Though they have no inclinations to that which is good, but walk diſorderly, yet you ſhould not think much to beſtow your pains to inſtruct them. Did not Chriſt take great pains for us, in coming from Heaven to ſeek and ſave our Souls, when we had nothing of good in us, but were in a ſinful loſt periſhing condition? *The Son of man is come to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt,* Luke 19. 10.

2. Inſtruction will be a means to breed good inclinations in your Children and Servants, and to convert them from their ſinful courſes unto the Lord,

if they be such as live in the transgression of the Commandments of God, *Psal.* 51.13. *Then will I teach Transgressors thy Ways, and Sinners shall be converted unto thee.*

3. If your Families be disordered and given to any Vice, and you do not labour to reform them by instructing, reproving, and praying for them, God will punish both you and your Families for ever; them for their sins, you for not restraining them: 1 *Sam.*3.13. *I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth, because his Sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.*

Sect. 4.

The plea of such as have dull Children or Servants, answered. How to deal with dull Persons, and such as have weak Memories.

Object.4. *My Children and Servants are so dull, and have such weak Memories that I cannot make them understand or remember any thing, and this discourageth me from instructing them.*

*Answ.*1. Dulness of Understanding and weakness of Memory oft-times proceed from the neglect and disuse of those Faculties; good Tools will grow rusty, and unfit for service, if they be not used. It was the field of the slothful which *Solomon* saw all grown over with Thorns, and covered with Nettles, *Prov.*24.30,31. Though a person may have good parts, yet if from his youth he neglect to bend his mind to understand the things of God, and to get the word of God into his memory, he will find his understanding dull, in apprehending, and his memo- weak in retaining Divine Objects.

2. Though your Children and Servants seem to be very

very dull and ſimple, yet by inſtructing them out of the word of God, they may become very wiſe and prudent perſons: *Pſal.*19.7. *The Teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, making wiſe the ſimple:* Pſal. 119.130. *The entrance of thy word giveth light, it giveth underſtanding to the ſimple. Solomon* ſpeaking of the word of God, ſaith, *It will give ſubtilty to the ſimple, to the young man knowledge and diſcretion, Prov.*1.4. Though your children be ſo raw, dull, and ignorant, that they know nothing at all of the things of God, yet by inſtructing them out of the word of God, you may bring them to know and fear the Lord, *Deut.*31.11, 13. *Thou ſhalt read this Law before all Iſrael in their hearing, that their Children which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God.*——

3. If your Children and Servants be dull of apprehenſion, and have weak memories, this ſhould not cauſe you to deſiſt from inſtructing them, but you ſhould rather take the more pains with them; *Eccleſ.*10.10. *If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then muſt he put to the more ſtrength; but wiſdom is profitable to direct.* The duller any perſons are, the more need they have of being taught, *Heb.* 5.11,12. *Ye are dull of hearing,—ye have need that one teach you.*——Though we are guilty of much folly, and ignorance, and dulneſs, the Lord our God doth not ceaſe from teaching and inſtructing us, but guides and directs us continually, *Pſal.*73.22,23,24. *So fooliſh was I, and ignorant, I was as a beaſt before thee; nevertheleſs I am continually with thee——thou ſhalt guide me with thy Counſel.* If God who is our Maſter, doth not leave off inſtructing us, becauſe of our ſimplicity and dulneſs, ſhall we think much to

teach our Servants, because of their ignorance and dulness?

4. If your Children and Servants be dull, and have weak memories, you must suit your instructions to their capacities; and seeing, as *Solomon* observeth, that when a man hath to do with blunt tools, *Wisdom is profitable to direct*, wisely consider by what ways and means you may so carry on this work of Instruction, as may make most for their edification, in regard of the dulness of their understandings, and weakness of their memories: And to this purpose I shall suggest to you these following directions.

1. Let the Scriptures which you teach them be plain and easie: There are some things in the Scriptures which are δυσνόητα, hard to be understood, 2 *Pet.*3.16. And there be other things that are plain and easie. Now they that are to deal with dull persons, must wave those things that are hard to be understood, *Heb.* 5. 11. and must teach them such things as are plain and easie, otherwise they will profit little or nothing by the instructions which you give them: 1 *Cor.*14.9. *Except ye utter by the tongue words easie to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.* And therefore if there be any obscurity either in the matter, or in the words and phrases of those Scriptures which you teach them, explain the sense and meaning thereof, as the Levites did, when they read the Law to the people, *Neh.*8.7,8.

2. Let the Scriptures which you teach them be short, and such as may be easily remembred, as well as easily understood. Let them also be comprehensive, such as comprehend much matter in few words. As for instance: *Solomon* comprehends the whole duty of man in few words, when he saith, *Eccles.*12.

13.

13. *Fear God and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.* Our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt ſums up all that is delivered by *Moſes* in the Law, and by the Prophets, in reference to our Duty to our Neighbour in a ſhort ſentence, *Matth.* 7. 12. *All things whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do to you, do ye even ſo to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.* The Apoſtle *Paul* comprehends all the Commandments that are ſcattered up and down the word of God concerning our duty towards our Neighbour, in one ſhort ſaying, *Rom.*13.9. *If there be any other Commandment it is briefly comprehended in this ſaying, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* The Apoſtles reſolved that grand queſtion, what a man ſhould do to be ſaved, in few words, *Acts* 16,30,31. *Sirs, What muſt I do to be ſaved? And they ſaid, Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved, and thy Houſe.* Perſons of the weakeſt memories may retain ſuch ſhort Scriptures as theſe are, and by retaining ſuch comprehenſive Scriptures, they may know and remember much of their duty, although they remember but few words.

3. If your Children and Servants be dull, inculcate the ſame things over and over to them, that they may be the more imprinted in their minds, and be more deeply rooted in their memories. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of ſuch as were dull, *Heb.*5.11. ſaith verſ.12. *Ye have need one teach you again which be the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God.* Teaching of Truths once or twice, is not enough for ſuch as are dull; they muſt be taught the ſame things again and again, *Iſa.*28.10. *Precept muſt be upon Precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, and there a little.*

4. Direct them to, and put them upon the pra-

dice of those things that will help the infirmities of their Understandings and Memories: As for instance;

First, Stir them up to pray to God to give them his holy Spirit: The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, and will make a man of a quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, *Isa.*11.2,3. It is his work to lead us into all truth, *John* 16.13. And to help the infirmities of our memories, by bringing Gods Word to our remembrance, *John* 14.26.

Secondly, Stir them up to repent of their sins: It is sin which darkens our minds, and keeps us from the knowledge of the truth, 2 *Tim.*3.6,7. *Silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.* Such persons as do not leave their sins, will abide in ignorance, although they be Hearers and Learners of Gods word as long as they live. But as for such as repent of their sins, and turn to God, though they be simple persons, yea such as have loved simplicity and hated knowledge, the Lord promiseth to make known his word to them, *Prov.*1.22, 23. *How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity, and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof; behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.*

Thirdly, Advise them to exercise their minds in studying and searching into the Scriptures, and to exercise their memories by committing some portion of Gods word to their memories every day: Hereby such as have weak memories, and could remember little or nothing at the first, will find their Memories improved wonderfully, and not only their

Memo-

Memories, but their Underſtandings alſo. Uſe and Exerciſe of the Faculties of the Soul, tend much to their improvement, which the Scripture as well as daily Experience doth teſtifie, *Heb.*5.14. *Even thoſe who by reaſon of uſe have their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil.*

Sect. 5.

The Plea of ſuch as neglect Family-Inſtruction becauſe their Children or Servants are hard-hearted and rebellious, anſwered.

Object.5. *My Children and Servants are ſo hard-hearted that nothing that I ſay unto them, takes any impreſſion upon their hearts; yea, they are ſtubborn and rebellious, oppoſite, and ready to contradict and gainſay thoſe things which I teach them out of the word of God: And to what end ſhould I trouble my ſelf to teach hard-hearted, rebellious, gainſaying perſons?*

Anſw. 1. Conſider whether God be not calling your ſin to remembrance, in ſuffering your Children to be ſtubborn and refractory in their carriage towards you. As for inſtance: Did not you in your your younger days carry your ſelves in a diſobedient ſtubborn manner towards your Parents? Or have you not been ſtubborn and diſobedient in your carriage towards God your heavenly Father? Or did you not neglect inſtructing your Children, and too much indulge them in their own wills and ways whilſt they were young? Or have you not ſome other way provoked God by your ſins, to afflict you with ſtubborn and diſobedient Children? If ſo, then humble your Souls before God for your ſins, and thereby you may prevail with God to remove this

puniſhment from you, and to bow and bend your Childrens hearts ſo, as they ſhall come and humble themſelves before you, and ſubmit to thoſe inſtructions which you ſhall give them out of the word of God. We know God can work wonderful changes in the hearts of men; he can make thoſe that have been an affliction to us, to come and humble themſelves before us, *Iſa.* 60. 14. *The ſons of them that afflicted thee ſhall come bending unto thee, and all they that deſpiſed thee ſhall bow themſelves down at the ſoles of thy feet.* And what more likely way is there to bring this about, then for us to bow down, and ſubmit our ſelves to God?

2. The Lord vouchſafes to teach hard-hearted rebellious gainſaying perſons, *Neh.* 9. 16, 17. 20. *They and our Fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy Commandments, and refuſed to obey, neither were mindful of the Wonders thou didſt among them, but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a Captain to return to their Bondage.* We ſee here what a rebellious people the *Iſraelites* were, but did this cauſe God to give over inſtructing them? No, for it is ſaid verſ. 20. *Thou gaveſt thy good ſpirit to inſtruct them.* And the like we may ſee *Iſa.* 65. 2, 3. *I have ſpread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walked in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts, a people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face.*— So alſo *Rom.* 10. 21. *To Iſrael he ſaith, All day long I have ſtretched forth my hands unto a diſobedient and gainſaying people.* Stretching out of the hands was uſed by thoſe that taught and inſtructed the people, *Prov.* 1. 24. *Acts* 26. 1. So that where the Lord ſaith, *I have ſtretched forth my hands to a gainſaying and rebellious people*; the meaning is, that he inſtructed them, and invited

invited them to repentance. Now if the Lord condeſcendeth to teach a rebellious gainſaying people, ſhall we think much to teach and inſtruct our Children or Servants, becauſe they are ſtubborn and rebellious?

3. Though our Children and Servants ſhould be hard-hearted and rebellious, yet we ſhould not forbear or ceaſe to inſtruct and teach them the good word of the Lord: For,

1. This will be a means to break their hard hearts, and lead them to Repentance, and keep them from being rebellious for time to come: It will break their hearts, though they be as hard as the Rock, *Jer.*23.29. *Is not my word like as a fire, ſaith the Lord, and like a Hammer that breaketh the Rock in pieces?* It will be a means to lead them to repentance, though they be of ſuch a refractory ſpirit as to oppoſe the the Truth, and ſhould be ſuch ſlaves to Satan, as to be led captive by him when and to what he pleaſeth, 2*Tim.*2.24,&c. *The ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themſelves out of the ſnare of the Devil, who are taken captive at his will.*—It may keep them from being rebellious for time to come, *Pſal.*78.5,7,8. *He eſtabliſhed a Teſtimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Iſrael, which he commanded our Fathers that they ſhould make them known to their Children, that they might ſet their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, and keep his Commandments, and might not be as their Fathers a ſtubborn and rebellious Generation.*

2. We ſhould ſin againſt God if we ſhould leave off teaching our Children or Servants becauſe they carry

carry themſelves unkindly and diſobediently towards us. The people of *Iſrael* carried themſelves ſtubbornly and rebelliouſly both againſt God and againſt *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.*8.7,19. yet *Samuel* tells them he would not ceaſe to pray for them and to teach them, leſt he ſhould ſin againſt God, 1 *Sam.*12.23. *Moreover as for me, God forbid that I ſhould ſin againſt the Lord, in ceaſing to pray for you, but I will teach you the good and the right way.* It is the Will and Command of God that rebellious and hard-hearted perſons ſhould be taught his Word, as we may ſee *Ezek.*2.3,4,7. where the Lord acknowledgeth the Children of *Iſrael* to be rebellious, impudent, and ſtiff-hearted, and yet he ſaith to the Prophet, *Thou ſhalt ſpeak my words unto them whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, for they are moſt rebellious.* And if it be Gods Command that the Rebellious ſhould be taught his Word, it muſt needs be a ſin to forbear teaching our Families, though ſome or all of them are rebellious perſons; for then we ſin, when we tranſgreſs any of the Commandments of God, 1 *John* 3.4. *Sin is the tranſgreſſion of the Law.*

3. Though our Children ſhould for the preſent rebel againſt thoſe Inſtructions and Commands which they receive from us, yet afterward they may conſider their ways, and repent, and follow thoſe Counſels and Inſtructions which we have given them. The elder Son ſpoken of in the Parable at firſt refuſed to obey his Father, but afterwards he repented and did what his Father commanded him: *Matth.*21.28,29. *A certain man had two Sons, and he came to the firſt, and ſaid, Son go work to day in my Vinyard; he anſwered and ſaid, I will not; but afterwards he repented and went.*

4. If

4. If your Children be hard-hearted, weep over them when you inſtruct them, that may be a means to break their hearts; *Acts* 21.13. *What mean you to weep, and to break my heart?* It is ſaid *Job* 14.13. *The Water wear the Stones:* Seeing waters will wear the ſtones, why may not you hope by your tears to diſſolve and break the ſtony hearts of your Children?

Sect. 6.

The Plea of ſuch as ſay their Children are too young to be inſtructed, anſwered.

Object. 6. *MY Children are young, and it is too ſoon to begin to teach them the Scriptures; they can't underſtand any thing as yet, if I ſhould go about to teach them; and beſides, I am afraid I ſhould prophane the word of God, and take the Name of God in vain, if I ſhould teach them whilſt they are young; and therefore I will let this work alone until they are grown up unto years of diſcretion, then I will do it.*

Anſw. 1. We can't begin too ſoon to teach our Children the word of God. As ſoon as they have learned to ſpeak, we ſhould endeavour to learn them the Scriptures, *Iſa.* 28.9. *Whom ſhall he teach knowledge, and whom ſhall he make to underſtand Doctrine? Them that are weaned from the Milk, and drawn from the Breſts.* It is ſaid of *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 3.15. *From a Child thou haſt known the Holy Scriptures*—ἀπὸ βρέφους, which is rendred by the Vulgar Latin, *Ab infantia, From thy Infancy*, and by *Schmidius*, *A primâ infantia, From thy firſt Infancy*, the ſame greek word is tranſlated *Luke* 18.15. *Infants*, and *Acts* 7.19. *Young Children*, *Luke* 2.12. *A Babe.* The word imports, that *Timothy* was taught the Scriptures very early, as ſoon

ſoon as ever he was capable of learning them. That Precept which is given *Prov.* 22. 6. *Train up a Child in the Way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it*; implies that we ſhould begin betimes to teach our Children the ways of the Lord. The Hebrew word uſed there for a Child, as *Schindler* obſerves, *totam ætatem teneram complectitur*, comprehends all a mans tender years, as, Infancy, Childhood, Youth. It is rendred a Babe, *Exod.* 2. 6. *The Babe wept*; and it is applied to one that hath not capacity to diſcern between good and evil, *Iſa.* 7. 16. *Before the Child ſhall know to refuſe the evil, and chuſe the good.*——So that when *Solomon* ſaith, *Train up a Child in the way that he ſhould go*, this Precept reacheth our youngeſt Children, and intimates we ſhould begin very early with them, to teach and inſtruct them as ſoon as there is any capacity in them to learn.

2. Satan begins betimes to corrupt our Children, and to teach them that which is evil: We ſee many Children learn to lie as ſoon as they can ſpeak, *Pſal.* 58. 3. *They go aſtray as ſoon as they are born, ſpeaking lies:* Others learn to mock the people of God, 1 *King.* 2. 23. *There came forth little Children out of the City and mocked him*; Others learn other vices. And ſhall not we begin as early to teach them good things, as Satan begins to teach them wicked and evil things?

3. There is a greater capacity in Children to learn and underſtand, than many are aware of; They are capable of receiving the holy Ghoſt whilſt they are in their Mothers womb, *Luk.* 1. 15, 41. And ſuch on whom God pours out his Spirit whilſt they are Infants, are capable betimes of knowing the things of God. We read *Pſal.* 8. 2. *Out of the mouths of*

Babes

Babes and Sucklings haſt thou ordained ſtrength, becauſe of thine Enemies, that thou mighteſt ſtill the Enemy and the Avenger. And we find this Scripture applied by Chriſt to the little Children, who cried in the Temple, *Hoſanna to the Son of David, Matth.* 21. 15, 16. Theſe little Children by the Revelation of Gods Spirit knew and underſtood that Jeſus Chriſt was the promiſed *Meſſiah*, which thing was hid from many of the Phariſees, who were wiſe and prudent men, *Matth.* 11.25.

4. Suppoſe our Children ſhould not underſtand for the preſent ſome of thoſe Scriptures which we teach them, yet they may underſtand them, and reap great benefit from them hereafter, it may be after we are laid in our Graves, *John* 12. 16. *Theſe things underſtood not his Diſciples at the firſt, but when Jeſus was glorified, then remembred they that thoſe things were written of him, and that they had done theſe things unto him.* And in another place we find that the Diſciples after Chriſts death were much helped in their Faith, by remembring a word that Chriſt had ſaid to them in his Life time, about his building of the Temple in three days after it ſhould be deſtroyed, *John* 2. 22. *When he was riſen from the dead, his Diſciples remembred that he had ſaid this unto them, and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jeſus had ſaid.*

5. It is not a profaning of Gods Name, or of his holy Word to teach our Children the Scriptures whilſt they are young, but it makes much for the glorifying of God. When little Children cried in the Temple, *Hoſanna to the Son of David*, the chief Prieſts and Scribes were ſore diſpleaſed; but what ſaid Chriſt to this? He juſtifies them, he ſaith it redounded to Gods praiſe: yea, ſo far was he from counting it a profaning of Gods Name, that he calls

it a perfection of praise, *Matth.*21.16. *Out of the mouths of Babes and Sucklings thou hast perfected praise.* And therefore we should look upon this as a Temptation of Satan, when we are perswaded to neglect instructing our Children while they are young, lest we should thereby profane the Name of the Lord.

6. Jesus Christ hath given a Charge for the feeding of his Lambs as well as his Sheep, *John* 21.15. *Lovest thou me? Feed my Lambs.* He was much displeased with those that would have hinder'd little Children from being brought unto him, *Mark* 10. 13,14. *They brought young Children to him, that he should touch them, and his Disciples rebuked those that brought them; but when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God.* It is the duty of little Children to praise the Lord, *Psal.*149.12,13. *Both young men and maidens, old men and children, let them praise the Name of the Lord.*—And how can they do this, except we teach them to praise the Lord? Amongst the Offerings under the Law, we find several Creatures offered to God very young; *Samuel* offered a sucking Lamb, 1 *Sam.*7.9. And *Aaron* is required to offer a young Calf, *Lev.*9.2. And they that were poor, and could not go to the price of a Lamb, were to offer two young Pigeons, *Lev.*5.7. This may teach us, that we cannot dedicate our selves or our Children too soon to the Lord; but the younger our Children are, when we begin to train them up in the knowledge and fear of God, the more acceptable it will be to the Lord, who desireth the knowledge of God more than Burnt-Offerings, *Hos.*6.6.

7. We

7. We know not how little a time we may live with our Children, or our Children may live with us, and therefore 'tis not safe deferring this work; for, *All flesh is grass*, Isa.40.6. and grass is of a fading nature, *In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down and withereth*, Psal.90. 6. Mans life is set forth by a more transient fading thing than grass, by the Apostle *James*, *What is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away*, Jam.4.16. Whilst therefore God continueth us with our Children, and our Children with us, we should set upon this work of teaching and instructing them with all speed, and with all our might, *Eccles.*9.10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the Grave, whither thou goest.*

Sect. 7.

The Plea of such as neglect Family-Instruction because their Families are endued with knowledge, answered.

Object.7. *MY Family are all knowing persons, and are well acquainted with the Scriptures already, so that it is needless for me to instruct them.*

Answ. First, If the case be so indeed, that all the Members of your Family be knowing persons, you have great cause to bless God, and to be thankful every day on their behalf, 1 *Cor.* 1.4,5. *I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ, that in every thing ye are inriched by him in all utterance and in all knowledge.*

2. It

2. It may be if you examine the ſeveral members of your Family, you ſhall not find all of them ſo eminent and abounding in knowledge as you think them to be, before you have made trial. Who would have thought that *Nicodemus* who was a Maſter in *Iſrael*, ſhould have been ſo ignorant in the Myſtery of Regeneration, that when Chriſt ſpake of a mans being born again, or elſe he could not ſee the Kingdom of God, he ſhould reply, *How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the ſecond time into his mothers womb, and be born?* Joh. 3. 4. And when Chriſt had explained his meaning, that he ſpoke of being born of the Spirit; he replied afterward, *How can theſe things be?* Verſ. 9. Inſomuch that our Lord Jeſus wonder'd that ſuch a man as he ſhould ſhew ſo much ignorance in ſuch things as theſe were, verſ. 10. *Jeſus ſaid unto him, Art thou a Maſter of Iſrael, and knoweſt not theſe things?* The Diſciples of Chriſt, after they had been a long time with their Maſter, and had been often inſtructed by him both publickly and privately, were ſo ignorant in the Doctrine of Chriſts Reſurrection, that they did not know what his riſing from the dead ſhould mean, *Mark* 9. 10. *They kept that ſaying with themſelves, queſtioning one with another what the riſing from the dead ſhould mean.* And as they did not underſtand the Reſurrection of Chriſt, ſo neither did they underſtand of a long time that he was to die for our ſins, *Luke* 9. 44, 45. *Let theſe ſayings ſink down into your ears, for the Son of man ſhall be delivered into the hands of men; but they underſtood not this ſaying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not.* And they were not only his ordinary followers, but his twelve Apoſtles, whom he choſe to be with him continually, that underſtood not what he taught them, when he

he ſpake of his Death and Reſurrection, as we may ſee *Luc.*18.31,32,33,34. Now if *Nicodemus* a Maſter in *Iſrael*, was ignorant of the nature of Regeneration, which is a work that muſt paſs upon every one that ſhall be ſaved; if the Diſciples of Chriſt, yea his Apoſtles, after they had been a long time with him, were ignorant of thoſe plain and fundamental Truths of the Death and Reſurrection of Chriſt; had not thoſe Maſters of Families that think all in their Families are endued with ſuch a great meaſure of knowledge that they want no inſtruction, need make enquiry into their Children and Servants knowledge, whether they are indeed ſo knowing as they think them to be?

Thirdly, Suppoſe all the Members of your Families be wiſe underſtanding perſons, endued with a great meaſure of knowledge, yet it is your duty to inſtruct them, that they may get more wiſdom, and it will be a benefit and advantage unto them to be inſtructed, *Prov.*9.9. *Give inſtruction to a wiſe man, and he will be yet wiſer; teach a juſt man, and he will increaſe in learning:* For,

1. Though you ſhould teach them nothing but what they knew before, yet thereby you may edifie them, whilſt you ſtir up their Faith, Hope, Love, Joy, Thankfulneſs, and Obedience, *&c.* by putting them in remembrance of known Truths. They to whom the Apoſtle *Peter* wrote, knew and were eſtabliſhed in the Truth; yet he reſolved as long as he lived to ſtir them up by putting them in remembrance of what he had taught them before, 2 *Pet.*1. 12,13. *I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of thoſe things though ye know them, and be eſtabliſhed in the preſent truth; yea, I think it meet as*

long as I am in this Tabernacle to ſtir you up by putting you in remembrance: But,

2. There is no man knows ſo much, but he may and ought to labour to grow in knowledge. *David* knew more than the Antients, and more than all his Teachers, and yet how often do we find him praying after this manner, *Give me underſtanding, Teach me thy Statutes*, &c. In the 119 *Pſalm*, where he ſpeaks of the great meaſure of knowledge whereby he excelled his Enemies, his Teachers, and the Antients, he prays 24 or 25 times to God, to give him knowledge. You ſhould not reſt ſatisfied that your Families do know the will of God, but you ſhould deſire and endeavour as the Apoſtle did in the behalf of the *Coloſſians*, that they may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wiſdom and ſpiritual underſtanding, *Col.* 1.9,10. You ſhould not only labour to bring them acquainted with the word of God, but endeavour that it may dwell richly in them, and that it may dwell in them in all wiſdom, *Col.*3.16. *Let the word of Chriſt dwell in you richly, in all wiſdom.*——

Sect. 8.

Family-Inſtruction muſt not be neglected, becauſe we have but a ſmall Family.

Object.8. Some perhaps may object, *My Family is ſo ſmall, I do not think it worth my time and pains to inſtruct them: If I had many Children, or many Servants, I would take pains to inſtruct them; but having ſo ſmall a Family, I do not think it worth the while to beſtow my time on one or two, becauſe I can imploy my time better.*

Anſw. 1.

Answ. 1. If you have but one Child, or one Servant to instruct, it is worth much time and pains to instruct that one person, for one Soul is more worth than the whole world, *Mark* 8. 36. Now you have spent and do spend much time and pains to get a little of the world; and will you then grudge the spending a little time or pains to save a Soul, which is more worth than the whole world, when as you willingly spend much time to gain a little of the world.

2. To instruct persons in the knowledge of Christ, is such a great and glorious work, that the holy Angels did not think much to go to a few Shepherds to acquaint them with the time and place of Christs birth; *Luc.* 2. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. And when one Angel was publishing this message to the Shepherds, there suddenly descended a multitude of the heavenly Host, as being desirous to do the same work, vers. 13, 14. And shall any of us think much to do that which the Angels of Heaven do, and rejoyce to be imployed in?

3. The Lord Jesus spent much time and pains in teaching and instructing one poor woman, the woman of *Samaria*, who was a sinner, and a woman of a churlish dispositon, that in an upbraiding manner denied him a Cup of Water, notwithstanding the Well was deep, and she saw that he had nothing to draw withal; and this he did at such a time as he had been wearied with his journey, and was both hungry and thirsty, *John* 4. 6. to 28. Now one hour of Christs time, was more worth than our whole lives; and shall we then think much to spend a little time in teaching one Child, or one Servant, whenas the Lord Jesus did not think much to spend his time

228 when he was weary, hungry, and thirsty, in teaching one poor woman?

4. Though you have but one Child or Servant to instruct, if God bless your labours so as to convert that Child or Servant, that one person may be instrumental to bring great glory to God, and to do good to many others. When the woman of *Samaria* was converted by Christ, she was a means of drawing a great part of the City where she lived, unto Jesus Christ; *John* 4.28,29,30. she did not only draw a great part of the City to hear him, but also was a means of their conversion, vers. 39. *Many of the Samaritans of that City believed on him for the saying of the Woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.*

5. Faithfulness to God, and such as are under our charge, is shown in discharging our duty to a few, as well as to many; and he that is not faithful to a few, would not be faithful if he had many committed to his charge, *Luc.* 16.10. *He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much, and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.* They that have but a few things committed to their trust, if they are faithful in them, shall have a great and glorious Reward, as well as they that have been intrusted with much, *Matth.* 25.23. *His Lord said unto him, Well done good and faithful Servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many things; enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.*

6. Whereas you say you could spend your time better than in teaching so few as you have in your Family, you should do well to consider, That we are not to spend our time in those things which seem right in our own eyes, *Deut.* 12.8. *Ye shall not do after*

ter all the things that we do here this day, every man whatſoever is right in his own eyes. But we are to ſpend our time in doing thoſe works which God hath given us to do, and in ſo doing we ſhall glorifie God, and follow the Example and Pattern of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, *John* 17.4. *I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do.* Now this is one work which God hath given you to do, to teach his *Word* to your Children, and hath commanded you to be diligent in it, *Deut.* 6. 6, 7.

Sect. 9.

The greatneſs of a Family is not a ſufficient Plea for the neglect of Family-Inſtruction.

Object. 9. SOme alſo may ſay, *My Family is ſo numerous, that I am not able to inſtruct them; if I had a leſſer Family I would do it, but I know not how to carry on this work in ſuch a great Family as I have.*

Anſw. 1. The more Souls you have in your Family, the more diligent you had need to be in this *work* of Family-Inſtruction, for you will have the greater account to give to God at the day of Judgment: The accompt we muſt give to God at the day of Judgment, is very ſtrict. He will call us to an account for every word, yea for every idle word, *Mat.* 12.32. *I ſay unto you, That every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an account thereof in the day of Judgment.* Now if we muſt give an account for every word, every idle word that we have ſpoken, ſhall we not much more give an account for every perſon whom God hath committed to our charge? Is not a man of far more value than a word?

2. If you neglect teaching your Family becauſe of the multitude of perſons that are in it, you are not like Chriſt, you are not of the ſame mind and ſpirit that Chriſt was of, for the greater the number of people was which reſorted to him, the more his Bowels of Compaſſion were ſtirred up to teach them, *Mark* 6 34. *And Jeſus when he came out ſaw much people, and was moved with compaſſion towards them,— and he began to teach them many things.* Neither are you like the Righteous, concerning whom *Solomon* ſaith, *Prov.* 10. 21. *The Lips of the Righteous feed many.*

3. Your Family is not greater and more numerous than *Abraham*'s Family was, for he was able to raiſe more than 300 fighting men out of the Servants born in his own houſe, *Gen.* 14. 14. *When Abraham heard that his Brother was taken captive, he armed his trained Servants born in his own Houſe, three hundred and eighteen, and purſued them unto Dan.* And notwithſtanding *Abraham* had ſuch a numerous Family, yet he taught them all to keep the ways of the Lord, *Gen.* 18. 19. *I know him, that he will command his Children and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord to do Juſtice and Judgment.* And thoſe three hundred and eighteen Servants whom he carried with him to reſcue *Lot*, mentioned *Gen.* 14. 14. were trained (or as it is in the Margin, *inſtructed*) Servants, which may be underſtood of their being religiouſly trained up; that they were inſtructed in the grounds of Religion, as well as of their training to civil or military Employments, as *Ainſworth* and *Calvin* obſerve: *Vatablus* his Note upon that Text is, *Pueros quos (ut quidam volunt) inſtruxerat Arte Bellicâ ac etiam Lege Divinâ:* And that which will confirm this expoſition, that theſe trained men were

trained

trained up *in the knowledge and fear of God*, is this, The ſame Hebrew word which is uſed here for trained men, is uſed for Religious Education *Prov.* 22.6. *Train up* (or as it is in the Margin, *catechiſe*) *a child in the way that he ſhould go.*

4. If your Family be numerous, you may render the work of inſtruction the more eaſie, by calling the whole Family together, when you inſtruct them, and then you may at the ſame time, with the ſame eaſe, inſtruct many as few. *Iſrael* being a numerous people, and they being all to be inſtructed, *Moſes* counſels the *Levites* to gather the people together, that the work might be done with the more eaſe, *Deut.*31.11,12. *Thou ſhalt read this Law before all Iſrael in their hearing; gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy ſtranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and obſerve to do all the words of this Law.* Do you thus, if your Family be numerous, at certain ſtated times appoint your whole Family to come together, and then you may with eaſe inſtruct all of them.

SECT. 10.

Great as well as mean men muſt inſtruct their Families.

Object.10. *I Am a great man, and this work is beneath me, to teach my Children and Servants.*

Anſwer: 1. Art thou greater than *Abraham*, who was a great *Prince*, Gen.23. 5, 6. *The Children of Heth anſwered Abraham, ſaying, Hear us my Lord, thou art a mighty Prince amongſt us*—and who is ſtiled the Father of the Faithful, and a Father of many

Nations? Yet he did not think it to be beneath him to teach his Family, *Gen.*18.19. Art thou greater than *David*, who was King of *Iſrael?* Yet he did not think much to teach his Family; *Prov.* 4. 3, 4. *I was my Fathers Son, tender and only beloved in the ſight of my Mother; He taught me alſo:* He did not only teach *Solomon*, but his other Children alſo, *Pſal.*34. 11. *Come ye Children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* Yea, he did not think much to teach Tranſgreſſors the ways of the Lord, *Pſal.* 51. 13. *Then will I teach Tranſgreſſors thy ways.*——

2. The Great GOD condeſcends to teach the meaneſt and pooreſt of men, *Pſal.* 25. 8. *Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach Sinners in the way:* John 6. 45. *It is written in the Prophets, And they ſhall be all taught of God:* Iſa.54.13. *And all thy Children ſhall be taught of the Lord,* Doth the Great GOD condeſcend to teach all ſorts of men, the Poor as well as the Rich, Children as well as grown Men, yea ſuch as are Sinners; and ſhall any man think himſelf too great to teach and inſtruct his Family?

3. It is an honour to be employed in doing any work or ſervice for God and Jeſus Chriſt. *John* the Baptiſt was a great man; Chriſt ſaith of him, *Among them that are born of women there hath not riſen a greater than John the Baptiſt,* Matth. 11.11. Yet this great man did not think himſelf above the meaneſt ſervice that he could be employed in for Chriſt, but thought himſelf unworthy to carry Chriſts Shoes after him, *Matth.*3.11. *He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whoſe Shoes I am not worthy to bear.* To teach the word of Chriſt unto our Children and Servants, is more honourable work than to carry Chriſts Shoes after him. Now if *John* the Baptiſt thought

thought himſelf unworthy to carry Chriſts Shoes after him, what great pride of ſpirit is it for any man to ſay or think it is a work beneath me, for ſuch a great man as I am to inſtruct my Family?

4. Riches, and Honour, and worldly Greatneſs, ſhould be ſo far from taking off any man from any good work, that they ſhould cauſe him to be more abundant in every good work, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17, 18. *Charge them that are rich in this world—— that they do good, that they be rich in good works.*—— *Jehoſhaphat*, who was a good, as well as a great man, was ſo far from neglecting any of the ways of the Lord becauſe of his Greatneſs, that his heart was more elevated and encouraged to lay out himſelf for God, by the Honour and Greatneſs which God had conferred upon him, 2 *Chron.* 17. 5, 6. *The Lord ſtabliſhed the Kingdom in his hand, and all Judah brought to Jehoſhaphat Preſents, and he had Riches and Honour in abundance, and his heart was lift up* (or as 'tis in the Margin) *was encouraged in the ways of the Lord.*

Sect. II.

The Plea of ſuch as ſay they have no ſpare time to inſtruct their Families, becauſe they are poor, or have much buſineſs, or are often abroad, anſwered.

Object. 11. THere are many will plead, *They have no ſpare time to inſtruct their Families; ſome becauſe they are poor, others becauſe they are often from home, a third ſort becauſe they are full of buſineſs, who are ready to ſay, On the week days we muſt attend our worldly occaſions, and on Lords days we muſt attend publick Ordinances, and take ſome time for our private Communion with God, ſo that we can find no time to inſtruct our Families.*

Anſw. 1.

*Anſw.*1. Do you not find time to eat and drink with your Children? If you can find time notwithſtanding all your buſineſs to eat and drink with your Families, if you had as great a delight in the word of God as *Job* had, you would alſo find time to inſtruct them out of the word of God; for he eſteemed Gods word more than his food, yea more than his neceſſary food, *Job* 23.12. *I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more than my neceſſary food.* Are not your Childrens Souls infinitely better than their Bodies? And will you then ſpend all your time in providing for their Bodies, and ſpare no time to inſtruct their Souls? Your Childrens Souls are in as great danger to periſh without Inſtruction, as their Bodies without Food and Rayment; their Bodies will die if they have no Food prepared for them, ſo will their Souls if they be without Inſtruction: *Prov.* 5.23. *He ſhall die without inſtruction, and in the greatneſs of his folly he ſhall go aſtray*: Hoſ. 4. 6. *My People are deſtroyed for want of Knowledge.*

2. Suppoſe you are poor, your Poverty ſhould be ſo far from keeping you from teaching Gods Word unto your Children, that you ſhould be the more diligent to ſtudy Gods word your ſelves, and to teach the ſame unto your Children: And that for ſeveral Reaſons: As,

Firſt, Gods Word will help you and your Children to bear your Poverty with Patience and Contentment. The Apoſtle *Paul* exererciſed much patience in his Afflictions, Neceſſities, and Diſtreſſes, and the help which he had to bear his Neceſſities with patience, was from the Word of God, 2 *Cor.* 6. 4,7. Increaſing in the knowledge of God, will ſtrengthen a man with all might to ſuffer all ſorts of

of afflictions, with all Patience, Long-ſuffering, and Joyfulneſs, *Col.*1.10,11.

Secondly, If you be poor, and can leave your Children nothing, you have the more need to leave them inſtructed in the Word of God; and if you leave them well inſtructed in the Word, you leave them a good portion, better then if you left them thouſands of pounds in Silver or Gold; *Pſal.*119. 72.*The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thouſands of Gold and Silver.*

Thirdly, By laying up Gods word in your hearts, and teaching it your Children, and practiſing it in your Lives and Converſations, you may come to be deliver'd from your Poverty, and be bleſſed with Riches: *Prov.*10.22. *The bleſſing of the Lord it maketh rich*; and who are more likely to obtain this Bleſſing, then they that treaſure up Gods word in their hearts, and teach it to their Children? *Job* 22. 22,24. *Receive I pray thee the Law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart; then ſhalt thou lay up Gold as duſt, and the Gold of Ophir as the ſtones of the brook:* Prov.24.4. *By knowledge ſhall the Chambers be filled with all precious and pleaſant Riches.*

Fourthly, If the Lord ſhould ſee it beſt for you and your Children to be kept in a poor and low condition, and ſhould deny you the Riches of this world, yet by converſing much with the word of God, and inſtructing your Children in the knowledge of the Scriptures, both you and your Children may come to be rich in faith; and by being rich in faith, both you and they ſhall become great Heirs, Heirs of a Kingdom; Heirs not of an earthly, but which is far better, of an heavenly Kingdom, *Jam.* 2.5. *Hath not God choſen the poor of this world rich in faith, Heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promiſed to them that love him?*

3. Mil-

3. Multiplicity of Buſineſs is not a ſufficient Plea for the neglect of this duty of Family-Inſtruction: For,

First, Next to the working out of our own ſalvation, we can have no Buſineſs of greater importance than the training up our Families in the knowledge and fear of God.

Secondly, A good man muſt order all his affairs with diſcretion, ſo as one Buſineſs may not hinder another; eſpecially that which is of leſſer moment muſt not hinder that which is of greater concerment.

Thirdly, When a man hath an heart for this work, he will eaſily find time to do it. Want of time may be pretended, but want of an heart to the work, is the real cauſe why it is neglected.

Fourthly, No men can have more or greater Buſineſs than Kings, who have the Affairs of an whole Kingdom lying upon their hands; yet *David*, who was a King, found time to teach his Children, *Prov.* 4.3,4. yet he had much other Buſineſs beſides governing the Twelve Tribes of *Iſrael*, who were a very numerous People; as, preparing Materials to build the Temple, compoſing of Pſalms, fighting of Battels, there being both Civil Wars, and War with forraign Enemies in his days, *&c.*

Fifthly, They that have moſt Buſineſs, if they take a view of their time, ſhall find that much of their time is loſt and miſ-ſpent, either in idleneſs, or vain unprofitable Diſcourſe, or unneceſſary thoughts and cares about the affairs of this life, or in ſome other kind. Do but ſpend ſo much time in Family-Inſtruction, as you have been uſed to ſpend unprofitably, and you ſhall find time enough for this work.

4. Suppoſe

4. Suppoſe you be full of Employment, that you can find no ſpare time on the week day, to inſtruct your Families, yet on every Lords day, wherein you are to lay aſide all your worldly Buſineſs, you may find time and leaſure enough to inſtruct your Families.

If you ſay,

On the Lords day we muſt attend upon the publick Worſhip and Service of God, and we muſt take alſo ſome time for private Communion with God, ſo that we have no ſpare time on the Lords days.

I anſwer,

It is true, it is our duty to attend upon the Publick Worſhip and Service of God, *Jam.*1.19. *Let every man be ſwift to hear:* And in ſo doing, we may expect Chriſts preſence with us, *Matth.*18.20. *For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midſt of them.* It is our duty alſo to keep up private Communion with God, to pray to God in ſecret, and to read and meditate on the word of God when we are alone, but both theſe may be done; we may attend on Gods Ordinances in publick, and alſo perform ſecret and Cloſet-duties, and yet have time ſufficient for to inſtruct our Families every Lords day.

5. That the plea of other buſineſs may not take you off from teaching your Families the word of God; conſider how acceptable this work is to Jeſus Chriſt. No work or buſineſs doth more pleaſe him, than to ſee us learning his word our ſelves, and teaching our Families what we have learnt. When Chriſt came to *Martha's* Houſe, ſhe received him, and took great care and pains to entertain Chriſt, and thoſe that came with him, and this was a very good and pious work; but *Mary ſat at Jeſus feet,*

and

and heard his word. Hereupon *Martha* goes to Christ, and complains that *Mary* had left her to serve alone: But what answer did Christ give her? It was this, *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her,* Luke 10.38,39,40,41,42. Where we see Christ commended *Mary*'s choice, who sat at his feet, and heard his word, above *Martha*'s, who received him into her house, and provided for his entertainment and his followers. And yet how good a work was it to receive and entertain Christ! There was cost, and care, and pains attending this work. And as Christ is highly pleased with such as give their minds to hear and learn his word, more than with those that were able and willing to feast him and his Apostles; So also it is a very acceptable work unto Christ, to see us instructing and teaching our Families; which doth plainly appear from his answer to the man out of whom the Devils departed, when he desired to be with him, *Luke* 8. 38,39. *Now the man out of whom the Devils were departed, besought him that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away saying, Return to thine own House, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee:* The man desired that he might be with Christ. Now to follow Christ, this was a good work, it might have conduced very much to the good of his Soul, for to have sat under Christs Ministry, and to have heard his Doctrine; possibly the man desired this to express his gratitude, by ministring to Christ, and attending his person, to do such service on all occasions as he should command him; yet the Lord Jesus chuseth rather to send him home to his own house to instruct his Family, than to answer his desire in suffering the man

man to be with him, which ſhews the great acceptance that this work hath with Chriſt, in that he choſe rather to have this man go home and inſtruct his Family, than to attend upon and miniſter to his own perſon.

6. As for ſuch whoſe occaſions call them to be much abroad, and to tarry long from home, I ſhall only hint two or three things:

1. When you are at home, be the more diligent and frequent in teaching your Children and Servants, by how much the oftner your occaſions neceſſitate your abſence from your Families.

2. Let your Charge at home cauſe you to diſpatch your Buſineſs abroad with what expedition you can, that you may haſten to your Families; and withſtand all ſollicitations of one or other that would detain you from returning with all convenient ſpeed to your own home.

3. Make up by Prayer what you cannot do by perſonal Inſtruction: Be earneſt with God to take the care of them, and to teach them in your abſence.

4. If your occaſions do neceſſitate you to be often and long abſent, depute ſome perſon in your abſence that may do this work for you: Or if you have none that you can depute in your room, allot them ſuch tasks as you ſhall ſee meet to exerciſe themſelves withal whilſt you are detained from them, and at your return take an account how they have improved their time therein.

7. If nothing that hath been ſaid will prevail with you to lay aſide this vain excuſe, *I have no ſpare time to do this work*; I ſhall only adde this further, That God will find a time to puniſh, and pour out his wrath upon thoſe perſons that can't find a time to perform

perform Family-Duties, as to inſtruct them, to pray with their Families, &c. *Jer.* 10. 25. *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and the Families that call not upon thy Name.*

Sect. 12.

The Plea of ſuch as are afraid they ſhould wreſt the Scriptures, anſwered. How to come to the true and right underſtanding of the Scriptures.

Object. 12. *I Am afraid I ſhould wreſt the Scriptures if I ſhould go about to teach my Family, becauſe I am a man of ſmall learning; and the Apoſtle tells us, There are ſome things in the Scriptures hard to be underſtood, which they that are unlearned do wreſt to their own deſtruction,* 2 Pet. 3. 16.

Anſwer: 1. Ought you not to be afraid of bringing the guilt of your Childrens blood upon your heads, by neglecting to teach them, and nurſing them in ignorance, as well as fear wreſting the Scriptures? If your Families be not inſtructed, but live and die in ignorance, they will periſh eternally, but their Blood God will require at your hands, as hath been ſhewed before.

2. As there are ſome thing in the Scripture hard to be underſtood, ſo there are other things plain and eaſie: As, That we ſhould love God with all our hearts, and love our Neighbour as our ſelves; That we ſhould truſt in the Lord at all times, and for all things; That we ſhould do unto all men as we would that they ſhould do unto us; That we ſhould be contented in every condition: With many other Precepts and Directions pertaining to an holy Life: Which are ſo plain and eaſie to be underſtood, that perſons of very mean capacities may underſtand them.

them. The Prophet ſpeaking of the way of Holineſs, ſaith, *Iſa.* 35. 10. *The wayfaring men, though fools, ſhall not erre therein.* And as the Practical part of Chriſtianity is eaſie to be underſtood, ſo there are many Principles ſo clearly and plainly revealed in the Scriptures, that perſons of mean abilities may underſtand them. As, That God made man upright, and created him after his own Image, in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs; That *Adam* did not continue in this eſtate, but ſinned againſt God by eating the forbidden fruit; That all men have ſinned, and come ſhort of the Glory of God; That the wages of ſin is death; That Jeſus Chriſt died for our ſins; That he roſe again from the dead the third day; That he aſcended into Heaven, and ſitteth there at Gods right hand to make Interceſſion for us; That whoſoever believeth in Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins, and have eternal life; That the dead ſhall be raiſed, and be all judged at the laſt day; That at the day of Judgment they that have done evil ſhall be caſt into Hell Fire, where they ſhall remain for ever; and they that have lived godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall be taken into the Kingdom of Heaven, *&c.* Now if you have not ability to teach them the more abſtruſe and myſterious points of the Chriſtian Religion, teach them thoſe things which are plain and eaſie; and whilſt you do ſo, God will open your Underſtandings, and give you farther inſight into the Myſteries of the Goſpel.

3. Your fear of wreſting the Scriptures, ſhould make you diligent in uſing the means to get a true and right underſtanding of the Scriptures; but it ſhould not make you neglect your duty in teaching your Children the knowledge of the Scriptures.

That man who had but one Talent, and out of fear did not improve his Talent, but went and hid it in the Earth, was not excuſed by his having but a mean Talent, or by his pleading his fearfulneſs; but is called by his Lord a wicked & a ſlothful ſervant, and was caſt into outer darkneſs, where there was weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth, *Matth.*25.24,25,26,30. *He which had received the one Talent, came and ſaid, Lord, I knew thee, that thou art a hard man,——And I was afraid, and went and hid thy Talent in the Earth; lo there thou haſt that is thine: His Lord anſwered and ſaid unto him, Thou wicked and ſlothful ſervant, thou kneweſt that I reap where I ſowed not, and gather where I have not ſtrawed; thou oughteſt therefore to have put my money to the Exchangers, that I might have received mine own with uſury. Take therefore the Talent from him——And caſt the unprofitable ſervant into outer darkneſs, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.*

If you ask,

What means ſhould we uſe that we may come to the true and right underſtanding of the Scriptures, and be kept from wreſting them?

I anſwer:

1. Be ſenſible of your own inability to underſtand the Scriptures of your ſelves, and pray to God to open your underſtandings, and to guide you into the true and right meaning of his holy word. It is Gods work to open the eyes of our underſtandings, whereby we may underſtand his word, *Luc.*24.45. *Then opened he their underſtandings, that they might underſtand the Scriptures:* Prov.20.12. *The hearing ear, and the ſeeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.* And ſeeing it is Gods work to enlighten our minds,

minds, we muſt pray to God to reveal to us the meaning of his word, when we give our ſelves to the reading of it, *Pſal.*119.18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.* And when we do with humble and lowly minds ſeek unto God, he will teach us, and lead us into the knowledge of the truth, *Prov.*28.5. *They that ſeek the Lord underſtand all things:* Pſal.25.9. *The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way.* They are uſually proud and ſelf-conceited perſons that fall into error, *Pſal.*119.21. *Thou haſt rebuked the proud, that are curſed, that do erre from thy Commandments.*

2. Read the Scriptures diligently, and mark the coherence of what you read, with that which went before, and that which followeth after; obſerve the ſcope, and conſider well both the words and matter of thoſe places which have any difficulty in them, this will help you to a right underſtanding of the Scriptures, 2 *Tim.*2.7. *Conſider what I ſay, and the Lord give thee underſtanding in all things.*

3. Compare one Scripture with another, that which is more obſcure with that which is more clear, that is the way to come to know the mind of Chriſt in the Scriptures: 1 *Cor.*2.13,16. ——*Comparing ſpiritual things with ſpiritual——we have the mind of Chriſt.*

4. Conſider what is the general deſign and ſcope of the whole Scripture; and if you would not wreſt the Scriptures, underſtand and expound particular Texts ſo as they may agree with, and not contradict, the general ſcope and deſign of the whole Scripture. Now the general ſcope and deſign of the Scripture, is,

1. To bring us to believe in Chriſt, and to teach

us to expect eternal Life by believing on Chriſt, *John* 20.31. *Theſe things are written that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his Name:* Prov.22. 19,20. *That thy truſt may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee: Have I not written to thee excellent things in counſels and knowledge?*

2. To keep us from ſinning againſt God, 1 *John* 2.1. *My little Children, theſe things write I unto you, that ye ſin not*—And to direct and help us to live holy and godly lives, *Tit.*1.1. *According to the faith of Gods Elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after Godlineſs:* 1 Tim.6.3. *If any man teach otherwiſe, and conſent not to wholeſome words, even the words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs.*

3. The general deſign of the Scriptures, is, to comfort and to encourage us in all eſtates and conditions to hope in God, *Rom* 15.4. *Whatſoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

5. Receive ſuch Truths as God reveals to you out of his word, with love, and yield ſincere obedience to them: When perſons do not love and obey the Word, God gives them up oft-times to ſtrong deluſions, that they believe lies inſtead of truth; 2 *Theſ.* 2.10,11. *Becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved; and for this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhould believe a lie.* But as for ſuch as do ſincerely obey the voice of the Lord, and continue therein, the Lord is wont to give them good underſtandings, and the ſpirit of a ſound mind; *Pſal.*111.10. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom, a good underſtanding have all they that*

that do his Commandments, John 7.17. *If any man will do his will, he ſhall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I ſpeak of my ſelf.*

6. Lean not to your own underſtandings, but truſt in the Lord with all your hearts, rely upon him to keep you from Errour of Judgment, and to lead and guide you into all Truth; you have ſeveral promiſes to encourage you to reſt upon God to teach you the truth, and to preſerve you in the knowledge and belief of the truth: I will mention ſome of them: *John* 16.13. *When he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth:* John 8. 31, 32. *Then ſaid Jeſus to thoſe Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my Diſciples indeed. And ye ſhall know the truth, and the truth ſhall make you free.* John 6.45. *It is written in the Prophets, And ye ſhall be all taught of God.*

7. Take ſome convenient times for chaſtening your Souls by faſting and humiliation for your ſins, and bewail before the Lord your ignorance and dulneſs, and all your other ſins, and cry mightily to him for that wiſdom which comes from above; hereby *Daniel* obtained a great meaſure of Divine Illumination and Knowledge in the Myſteries of Salvation, *Dan.*10.12. *Fear not Daniel, for from the firſt day that thou didſt ſet thine heart to underſtand, and to chaſten thy ſelf before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.* And at another time, whilſt he was humbling his Soul for his ſins, and calling upon God, the Lord ſent an Angel to give him skill and underſtanding, *Dan.*9.20,21,22,23.

Sect. 13.

How to taste the sweetness that is in Gods Word. The feeling of a dry unsavoury Spirit will not excuse the neglect of Family-Instruction.

Object. 13. *I Do not find my own heart affected with the Word of God, and how then can I hope that God should accept my work, or that I should edifie my Family by instructing them? If I could relish and savour the sweetness that is in Gods Word my self, I should delight to instruct my Family; but because I find my heart in an unsavoury frame, this discourageth me from this work.*

Answ. 1. There is an exceeding great sweetness in the word of God; it is, as *David* expresseth it, *sweeter then honey, and the honey-comb*, Psal. 19. 10. And we should labour to taste and feel the sweetness thereof, and to keep always the savour and relish thereof upon our spirits.

If any say, *How may this be done?*

I answer: 1. We must put away all our sins, for sin vitiates the Palat of the Soul, that it cannot find any delight in the word of God. *Jeremiah* speaking of the Jews that had greatly corrupted their ways, saith of them, *Jer.* 6. 10. *Behold the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach, they have no delight in it.* As long as a man remaineth in the band of iniquity, he is in the gall of bitterness, *Acts* 8. 23. *I perceive thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity*: And it is no wonder that a man who is in the gall of bitterness, doth not taste the sweetness of the word of God. When we do seriously set our selves to reform our hearts and lives, and do refrain our selves from every evil way, we shall find unexpressible

sweet-

ſweetneſs in the word of God, though we found none at all before; *Pſal.* 119. 101, 103. *I have refrained my ſelf from every evil way—How ſweet are thy words unto my taſte? Yea ſweeter than honey to my mouth:* No earthly thing excels Honey in ſweetneſs, *Judg.* 14. 18. *What is ſweeter than honey?* Now *David* who did refrain himſelf from every evil way, did find a ſweetneſs in Gods word, not which was equal to, but ſuch as did far exceed the ſweetneſs of Honey; *Yea ſweeter then Honey to my mouth.*

2. We muſt by the help of the word labour to find out Jeſus Chriſt, which we may ſoon do, if we be diligent in ſearching the Scriptures, *John* 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures——they are they which teſtifie of me.* And when we have found Chriſt, let us through the help of the word reſt and repoſe our Souls upon him, then ſhall we find great ſweetneſs and joy in his word, *Cant.* 2. 3. *I ſate down his under ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte.* When *Philip* preached Chriſt to the City of *Samaria,* they that heard him found great joy in the word of God, *Acts* 8. 5, 8. *Philip went down to the City of Samaria, and preached Chriſt unto them, and there was great joy in that City.*

3. We muſt feed upon the word of God by faith and meditation, and make applications of the precious promiſes to our own Souls, and then we ſhall find great joy and delight in the word of God, *Jer.* 15. 16. *Thy Words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and the rejoycing of my heart.* As the way to find and taſte the ſweetneſs which is in God, is, to have our hearts and thoughts much exerciſed in meditating on him, *Pſal.* 104. 34. *My meditation of him ſhall be ſweet*——So meditation on the Scriptures will cauſe us to delight and taſte

ſweetneſs in the Scriptures; delight in the Law will accompany a diligent and ſerious meditation on the Law of God, as we may ſee *Pſal.* 1. 2. *His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate day and night.*

4. If we would reliſh and taſte the ſweetneſs that is in Gods word, we muſt practice what we read and hear, we muſt take counſel from the Scriptures how to order our Converſations and all our affairs according to the mind and will of God, and walk according to the counſels and directions which are given us in the word of God, and then Gods Teſtimonies will be delightful to our ſouls, *Pſal.* 119. 24. *Thy Teſtimonies are my delight and my Counſellours.* After *David* had ſpoken of his obedience that he yielded to the word of God, he ſpeaks of the ſweetneſs he found in it, verſ. 102, 103. *I have not departed from thy Judgments,* —*How ſweet are thy words unto my taſte!*

II. Though you can't get your hearts into ſo good a frame as you deſire, but are ſenſible of much drineſs, coldneſs, deadneſs, and unſavourineſs, yet you muſt not neglect the inſtructing your Families, becauſe you do not find ſuch ſweetneſs and delight in the word of God as others do, and that for ſeveral Reaſons: As,

1. God can convey the water of life through a dry and barren Reed. He makes uſe of earthen Veſſels to convey the heavenly treaſure of knowledge and grace, that the glory may not be given to the Inſtruments, but that it may appear that it is his excellent power whereby the Sons of men are enlightned and ſanctified: 2 *Cor.* 4. 7. *We have this treaſure in earthen Veſſels, that the excellency of the Power may be of God, and not of us.*

2. Though

2. Though you find your hearts out of frame before you go to your work, God may come in with his ſpirit, and move and warm your hearts whilſt you are opening or rehearſing ſome portion of the Scriptures to your Children, *Luke* 24.32. *And they ſaid one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures.* If you endeavour to water your Families with the dew of heaven, God will water your ſouls, *Prov.* 11.25. *He that watereth, ſhall be watered alſo himſelf.*

3. If you do this work out of obedience to the command of God, and act your faith on the Lord Jeſus for the pardon of the imperfections that attend this work, though you do not find ſo much comfort and delight in the doing thereof as you wiſh you could, but are ſenſible of ſome drineſs and flatneſs of ſpirit, yet your work ſhall be accepted of God, *Acts* 10.35. *In every Nation he that feareth him and worketh Righteouſneſs, is accepted of him.*

4. If you apply your ſelves to Jeſus Chriſt, he will take away your drineſs, and refreſh and repleniſh your Souls with the Graces of his Spirit. It is ſaid of Jeſus Chriſt, That *he ſhall be as Rivers of Water in a dry place*, Iſa 32.2. And he hath promiſed ſuch of his Servants as find their Souls to be like the dry ground, that he will pour out his Spirit like flouds of water upon them; that is, in an abundant meaſure, *Iſa.* 44. 3. *I will pour water upon him that is thirſty, and flouds upon the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Bleſſing upon thine Off-ſpring.*

Sect.

Sect. 14.

The Plea of ſuch as ſay 'Tis the Miniſters work to inſtruct their Children, anſwered.

Object. 14. *THis is the Miniſters work, not mine, to catechiſe and inſtruct my Servants and my Children, and why then ſhould I take it in hand?*

Anſwer: Beſides what the Miniſters of Gods word are to do in this kind, it is the duty of Parents and Maſters of Families to teach and inſtruct their Children and Servants, as hath been proved already by many clear Texts of Scripture; I ſhall re-mind you of ſome of them: *Iſa.* 38. 19. *The Father unto the Children ſhall make known thy truth:* Pſal. 78. 5. *He eſtabliſhed a Teſtimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Iſrael, which he commanded our Fathers that they ſhould make them known to their Children:* Epheſ. 6. 4. *And ye Fathers provoke not your Children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* Deut. 6. 6, 7. *And theſe words which I command thee this day, ſhall be in thine heart, and thou ſhalt teach them diligently unto thy Children.*— This Precept is not given only to the Prieſts or Levites, but to the whole Houſe of *Iſrael*, verſ. 4. So that it is a frivolous excuſe for any man to think to put off this work from himſelf, by ſaying, it is the Miniſters work to catechiſe his Children; for God commandeth all Parents to teach his Word to their Children: Yea, it is a notorious falſehood for any man to ſay, This is none of my work to inſtruct my Family, whenas the Lord hath given ſo many and ſuch ſtrict Precepts to every man to inſtruct his Children.

Sect

Sect. 15.

Only ſuch as are called of God, are to take upon them the work of the Miniſtry. Family-Inſtruction will not bring the Miniſtry into contempt.

Object. 15. *If every man ſhould take upon him to teach and inſtruct his Family, this would be the way to make every man turn Preacher, and would cauſe the Miniſters of the Word to be ſlighted and deſpiſed; and this makes us not only forbear this work our ſelves, but alſo to diſlike it in others; becauſe we would not have any take upon them the work of the Miniſtry but ſuch as are called to it, and we would not have the publick Miniſtry brought into contempt.*

Anſw. 1. Family-Inſtruction and the work of the Miniſtry, are two diſtinct works; The one belongs to every Maſter of a Family, the other belongs only to ſuch as are called and ſent forth by God to preach the Goſpel, *Rom.* 10. 15. *How ſhall they preach except they be ſent?* And God hath not called all men to the work of the Miniſtry, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28, 29. *God hath ſet ſome in the Church, firſt Apoſtles, ſecondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers—— Are all Apoſtles? Are all Prophets? Are all Teachers?* We may learn from this Text, 1, That none are to be Teachers in the Church, but thoſe whom God ſets there: 2. That God doth ſet ſome, not all, to be Teachers in the Church. Under the Law no man was to take the Office of the Prieſthood without a call from God, *Heb.* 5. 4. *And no man taketh this honour unto himſelf, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron.* Yea, God made it death for ſuch as were not called to intermeddle with the Prieſts Office, *Numb.* 18. 7. *Thou and thy Sons with thee ſhall keep your Prieſts Office, for every*

every thing of the Altar, and within the Vail, and ye ſhall ſerve——And the ſtranger that cometh nigh, ſhall be put to death. What work our Lord Jeſus did in and for the Church of God, he did not do it without a Call: *Heb.*5.5. *So alſo Chriſt glorified not himſelf to be made an high Prieſt, but he that ſaid unto him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* And God hath ordained under the Goſpel that every man ſhould improve thoſe gifts which he hath diſtributed to him, within the ſphere and compaſs of his Calling, 1 *Cor.*7.17. *As God hath diſtributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, ſo let him walk, and ſo ordain I in all Churches.* Thoſe works which are in themſelves good works, become ſinful when they are done by thoſe that have no call to do them, and inſtead of being rewarded, they have been puniſhed by the Lord. To burn Incenſe upon the Altar of Incenſe, was a very good and acceptable work. *David* wiſheth that his Prayer might be like Incenſe, *Pſal.*141.2. *Let my Prayer be ſet before thee as incenſe:* Yet when *Uzziah* undertook to burn Incenſe, who had no Call to do it, it is called a Tranſgreſſion, and he was puniſhed with Leproſie all his days, 2 *Chron.* 25.18,21. *It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incenſe unto the Lord, but to the Prieſts the Sons of Aaron, that are conſecrated to burn incenſe, go out of the Sanctuary, for thou haſt treſpaſſed; neither ſhall it be for thine honour from the Lord God: And Uzziah the King was a Leper unto the day of his death.* The more knowledge any man hath of the Scriptures, the leſs fear there is of his taking upon him the work of the Miniſtry without a Call from God, (what this Call is, and how a man may diſcern when he hath it, would be too great a digreſſion, if I ſhould here undertake the explanation thereof) becauſe the Scriptures

ptures are so full, so plain, so expres in this point, That only they that are called of God should take upon them the work and Office of the Ministry. So that this Objection, *Every man will turn Preacher if he take upon him to instruct his Family in the knowledge of the Scriptures*, is of no force to hinder this work of Family-Instruction.

2. Neither will the training up our Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures, cause the Ministry or Ministers of Gods word to be slighted; but on the contrary, the more our Children and Servants are acquainted with the Scriptures, the more they will prize and reverence the Ministers of Christ, for the Scriptures do teach us to esteem very highly of Christs Ministers, 1 *Thes.* 5.12,13. *We beseech you, Brethren, to know them that labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their works sake*: Rom. 10. 15. *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of Peace, and bring glad Tydings of good things.* 1 Tim. 5.17. *Let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine.* They are stiled Christs Embassadors, 2 *Cor.* 5.20. *Now we are Ambassadours for Christ.* And who are more honoured than the Embassadours of an Earthly Prince? The Scriptures shew what a great sin it is to despise the Ministers of Christ; the Lord Jesus counts himself and his Father despised, when they are despised, *Luke* 10.16. *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*: 1 Thes. 4. 8. *He that despiseth, despiseth not man but God, who also hath given unto us his holy Spirit.* So that the training up of our Families in the fear of God, and knowledge of the Scriptures, will be so far from causing

causing them to slight the Ministers of Christ, or the Ministry of the Word, that it will cause them to reverence and esteem them.

Sect. 16.

It is dangerous to neglect reading the Scriptures, or teaching them our Children, from this Plea, That we need do nothing more than follow the Light within us.

Object. 16. *There is a Light in all Men, Women, and Children, which will teach them to do that which is just and right in the sight of God and men, and will lead them to Life and Salvation, if they do but follow the Light that is in them: So that we judge it needless to read the Scriptures, or to instruct our Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures, we do enough if we call upon them to follow the Light that is within them.*

Answ. It is a great and dangerous mistake, for a man to neglect reading and searching the Scriptures, and instructing his Family in the knowledge of the Scriptures, from a perswasion that neither he nor his Family need to do any thing more towards the obtaining Salvation, than to follow the Light that is in them.

To make this evident, Consider,

1. There is no man hath so much Light or Knowledge, but it is necessary that he should give himself to the reading of the Scriptures, thas he may gain more Knowledge. All men may be ranked under these two heads, either they are such as abide in their natural unregenerate condition, or they are such as are converted and endued with the grace of God. As for men in their natural condition, they

they are deſtitute of ſaving knowledge, *Rom.* 3. 11. *There is none that underſtandeth, there is none that ſeeketh after God:* 1 Cor. 2. 14. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned:* Rom. 1. 31. *Without underſtanding.* They are ſaid to be in darkneſs, 1 *John* 2. 9, 11. *He that ſaith he is in the Light, and hateth his Brother, is in darkneſs even until now——He that hateth his Brother is in darkneſs, and walketh in darkneſs, and knoweth not whither he goeth, becauſe that darkneſs hath blinded his eyes.* They are ſaid not only to be in darkneſs, but to be darkneſs it ſelf, *Epheſ.* 5. 8. *Ye were ſometimes darkneſs, but now are ye Light in the Lord; walk as Children of Light.* And therefore men in their natural condition had need give themſelves to reading of the Scriptures, that they may be inlightned and converted to God: *Pſal.* 19. 7, 8. *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul; the Teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, making wiſe the ſimple;——The Commandment of the Lord is pure, inlightning the eyes:* And that they may be made wiſe to ſalvation; for the knowledge of the Scriptures will make men wiſe to ſalvation, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. *From a Child thou haſt known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wiſe to ſalvation, through faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus.*

As for ſuch as are inlightned, and converted to God, even thoſe of them that are endued with the greateſt meaſure of ſaving knowledge, have need to read the Scriptures daily and diligently, that they may get more knowledge; for the wiſeſt men are imperfect in knowledge. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith of himſelf, that he knew but in part, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. *Now we ſee through a glaſs darkly, but then face to face.*

Now

Now I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I am known. *David*, who was wiser then his Enemies, *Psal.*119 98. and had more understanding than all his Teachers, vers.99. and understood more than the Ancients, vers.100. doth acknowledge before God that he had much folly and ignorance, *Psal.*69. 5. *O God thou knowest my foolishness*: Psal.73.22. *So foolish was I, and ignorant, I was as a Beast before thee.* And he prayeth with great earnestness unto God, to give him knowledge and understanding, and to teach him his Statutes, as we may see *Psal.*119. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law*: Verse 33. *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy Statutes*: Vers.34. *Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy Law*: Verse 125. *I am thy Servant, give me understanding that I may know thy Testimonies*: And in many other places. We are commanded to grow in knowledge, as well as in grace, 2 *Pet.*3.18. *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* And therefore seeing the Scriptures are the means whereby we get knowledge, *Psal.*119. 104. *Through thy Precepts I get understanding*: And the means of increasing knowledge, verse 99. *I have more understanding than all my Teachers, for thy Testimonies are my meditation*: It is necessary that they who have the greatest measure of Light and Understanding, should read and meditate in the Word of God night and day, that they may grow in knowledge.

2. There are some sins which that Light which is in natural men cannot discover, without the help of the Word and Spirit of God. As for instance: The first motions of sin, though not consented to, are sin; for they are transgressions of the Law, which saith, *Thou shalt not covet*: The Law doth not only say,

ſay, Thou ſhalt not conſent to, thou ſhalt not follow or yeild to thy inordinate deſires, but it forbids the motions themſelves, *Thou ſhalt not covet.* Now the Apoſtle *Paul* telleth us he had not known theſe firſt motions (which he calls by the name of luſt) to be ſin, if it had not been for the Law of God, *Rom.*7. 7. *Nay, I had not known ſin, but by the Law; for I had not known luſt, except the Law had ſaid, Thou ſhalt not covet.* Not to believe in Jeſus Chriſt, is a great ſin, it is a ſin for which God will damn men at the day of Judgment, *Mark* 16.16. *He that believeth not ſhall be damned:* Now the Light of Nature doth not convince a man that it is a ſin not to believe in Jeſus Chriſt; it is by the Scripture, which holdeth forth the damnable nature of this ſin of not believing in Jeſus Chriſt, *John* 3.18. *He that believeth not, is condemned already, becauſe he hath not believed in the name of the onely begotten Son of God.* And by the help of the Spirit that we come to be convinced of the ſin of not believing in Chriſt, *John* 16. 8,9. *And when he* (that is, the Spirit, which is the Comforter ſpoken of in the former verſe) *is come, he will reprove the world of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgment; of Sin, becauſe they believe not in me.* And as there are ſome ſins of which natural Light doth not convince a man; ſo thoſe ſins of which it doth convince a man, it doth not convince with ſuch clearneſs and power as the Law doth, which ſtops a mans mouth, and makes him fall down before God as as a loſt undone Creature, *Rom.*3.19,20. *Now we know that what things ſoever the Law ſaith, it ſaith to them who are under the Law; that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before God:* —— *By the Law is the knowledge of ſin.*

3. There are ſeveral Points of the Chriſtian Religion

ligion of great moment, which that Light that is in natural men diſcovereth not, neither can we know them any other ways, but by the help of the Scriptures, or by immediate Revelation from God. As for inſtance: To know and believe that *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* is the promiſed Meſſiah, is of ſuch moment, as that we can't be ſaved unleſs we believe him to be the Meſſiah, *John* 8.24. *I ſaid therefore unto you, That ye ſhall die in your ſins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins.* Now this knowledge, Fleſh and Blood, Nature in its higheſt improvements cannot attain, it muſt either be by Revelation from God, *Matth.*16.15,16,17. *Whom ſay ye that I am? And Simon Peter anſwered and ſaid, Thou art Chriſt the Son of the living God: And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him, Bleſſed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, for fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven*: Or by the help of the Scriptures. And therefore when *Apollos* would convince the Jews that Jeſus was the Chriſt, he did it by the Scriptures, *Acts* 18. 28. *For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, ſhewing by the Scriptures that Jeſus was Chriſt.* And this way the Apoſtle *Paul* took alſo, he alledged thoſe Scriptures that ſpoke of the Meſſiah, and explained them, and thereby proved to them that *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* was Chriſt: *And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reaſoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alledging that Chriſt muſt needs have ſuffered, and riſen again from the dead, and that this Jeſus whom I preach unto you, is Chriſt.* It is of great moment to know what that Righteouſneſs is whereby a Sinner ſhould come to be juſtified in the ſight of God: If a man be ignorant of this Righteouſneſs, he will ſeek to eſtabliſh his own, and will not ſubmit

mit to the Righteouſneſs of God, *Rom.*10.3. *For they being ignorant of Gods Righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own Righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves unto the Righteouſneſs of God.* The Light of Nature cannot find out this Righteouſneſs, it is no where revealed but in the Goſpel, *Rom.*1.16, 17. *I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt, for it is the power of God unto ſalvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew firſt, and alſo to the Greek; for therein is the Righteouſneſs of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The Juſt ſhall live by faith.* That there are Three Perſons, and yet but One God, is plainly revealed in the Scriptures, 1 *John* 5.7. *There are Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; and theſe Three are One.* But without the help of the Scriptures, the Light of Nature can attain to but little or no knowledge of this great Myſtery. And as there are ſome Doctrines, ſo alſo ſome Duties in the Chriſtian Religion, which the Light of Nature cannot diſcover. As for inſtance: Baptizing of perſons with water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghoſt, is an Ordinance of Jeſus Chriſt, which he would have continued, and with which he will afford his preſence to the end of the world, *Matth.*28,19,20. So alſo is eating Bread, and drinking Wine, in the Lords Supper, an Ordinance of Chriſt, to be continued in the Church till his coming to Judgment; 1 *Cor.*11.26. *As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do ſhew forth the Lords death till he come.* But natural Light doth not teach a man that it is his duty to be baptized, or to receive the Lords Supper: It is from the Scriptures we learn that Baptiſm and the Lords Supper are Ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt; and that the uſe of theſe Ordinances is

to be continued in the Church of Christ to the end of the World.

4. The Light which we must attend unto, and follow, and by which we must order our Lives and Conversations, is the Mind and Will of God revealed in the Scriptures, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. *We have also a more sure Word of Prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a Light that shineth in a dark place; until the Day dawn, and the Day-star arise in your hearts.* Observe here,

First, That the Light to which the Apostle would have us take heed, and saith they do well who take heed to it, is the Word of Prophecy; by the Word of Prophecy, he understands the Scriptures, which were written, and delivered to us by the Prophets, as is evident from the ensuing word, *Knowing this first, that no Prophecy of the Scriptures*, &c.

Secondly, It is our duty to take heed to the word of Prophecy, as long as we live in this world; *Whereunto ye do well to take heed,——until the Day dawn, and the Day-star arise in your hearts*: By the Day-star is meant Jesus Christ, *Rev.* 22. 16. *I am the bright and morning Star*: By the Day, is not meant only or chiefly the day of Grace, or the day of the Gospel, for these days had already dawned upon those persons to whom the Apostle wrot this Epistle, for he saith of them, *They knew and were established in the present truth*, vers. 12. They were not only acquainted with the Doctrine of the Gospel, but were in a state of Grace; they had Faith, as precious Faith as the Apostle himself who wrote this Epistle, vers. 1. *To them that have obtained like precious Faith with us.*—— But by the dawning of the Day, is meant the Day of Glory, which is called the Day of Christ, *Phil.* 1. 9, 10. *Phil.* 2. 16. and by way of Emphasis, *That Day,*

Day, 2 Tim. 4. 8. And by the Apoſtle *Peter* in this ſame Epiſtle, Chap. 3. 12. *The Day of the Lord.* It is the dawning of this day that the Church and People of God long for, *Cant.* 2. 16. *Until the day break, and the ſhadows flee away: turn my Beloved, and be thou like a Roe or a young Hart upon the mountains of Bether:* Rev. 22. 20. *Surely I come quickly, Amen: Even ſo come Lord Jeſus.* By the Day-Star ariſing in their hearts, is meant their full and immediate fruition of the Lord Jeſus in the Kingdom of Heaven; for they having like precious Faith with the Apoſtle, had this Day-ſtar the Lord Jeſus already dwelling in their hearts by faith, *Epheſ.* 3. 17. *That Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by Faith*: And the Apoſtle ſpeaks not of what they had already, but of what they ſhould attain unto hereafter, which is their full and immediate enjoyment of Chriſt in Heaven. Our entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven, may well be ſet out by this Phraſe, the Day-ſtar ariſing in our hearts, becauſe when we come to heaven there ſhall be great Glory revealed in us, as well as given to us, *Rom.* 8. 18. *I reckon that the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that ſhall be revealed in us.* And the reaſon why the Saints deſire to be in Heaven, is, That they may be with Chriſt, *Phil.* 1. 23. *Having a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt.* The World may well be ſtiled a dark place, in oppoſition to the Kingdom of Heaven, which is called by the Name of Light; *Col.* 1. 12. ——*The Inheritance of the Saints in Light*; and becauſe moſt places and perſons in the world are full of Ignorance and Darkneſs: In the Pſalmiſts days, all places of the earth, except the Land of *Iſrael*, were dark places; *Pſal.* 74. 20. *The dark places of the earth are full of the Habitations of Cruelty.* And in

Iſrael, which was a Land of Viſion, the Prophet complains, *Hoſ.*4.1. *There is no knowledge of God in the Land.* Now as long as we are in this dark place, the World, where we are compaſſed about with much ignorance, we ſhall do well to take heed to the word of Prophecy which the Lord hath given us, as a Light to guide and direct our paths, till the Day of Glory dawn upon us, and we are taken up into the Kingdom of Heaven, where there ſhall be no need of the Sun, or Moon, or any Temple, but the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, ſhall be the Light of His People for ever, *Revelat.* 21. 22, 23.

Thirdly, We may obſerve, That we cannot have a more ſure Rule to guide us, either in matters of Faith or Practice, than the holy Scriptures. What do we deſire to guide and direct us what we ſhould believe, or what we ſhould practiſe? Do we deſire a Viſion, a Revelation, a Voice from Heaven? The Word of Prophecy is as ſure as theſe; Yea, the Apoſtle having been ſpeaking of a Voice from Heaven, gives the preheminence to the Word of Prophecy, and ſaith, *We have a more ſure Word of Prophecy.*— Beſides this place which I have already produced to prove that the Light to which we muſt attend, and by which we muſt order our Lives and Converſations, is the Mind and Will of God revealed in the Scriptures; I might mention ſeveral others, as *Prov.*6 23. *The Commandment is a Lamp, and the Law is Light:* Pſal.119.105. *Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my path.* The ſame alſo may be gathered from the diſcourſe of Chriſt with the Lawyer, and of *Abraham* with the rich man that was in Hell-Torments, *Luc.*10.25,26, 27,28. There came a man to Jeſus Chriſt, and asked him

him this question, *Master what shall I do to inherit eternal Life?* And whether doth Christ send him for direction? To the Scriptures: *He said unto him, What is written in the Law? How readest thou?* Whereupon the man tells Christ what he had found written, and what he had read in the Law; *And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy Neighbour as thy self:* To which Christ gives him this answer, *And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live.* Whence we may infer, That reading the Scriptures, and practising what we read, will guide us into the right way that leads to everlasting life. When the Rich Man, who was tormented in Hell, pleaded with *Abraham* to send *Lazarus* to his Brethren, to preach to them, that they might not come into that place of torment; what answer did *Abraham* give him? Did he tell them, They had a Light in them, if they did follow that, it would lead them to Repentance and Salvation? No, he refers them to the Scriptures, *Luc.*16.29. *Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them.* He doth not mean they had *Moses* and the Prophets alive, and conversing amongst them in their own persons, but they had the Writings of *Moses* and the Prophets, and they were to attend to them, and adds moreover, If the Scriptures that were written by *Moses* and the Prophets would not lead them to Repentance, the coming of one from the dead would not work upon them, verse 31. *If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be perswaded, though one rose from the dead.*

5. The danger of neglecting the Scriptures, and following our own Light, without looking to, and

regulating our apprehenſions by the word of God, may be further evidenced from the fallible nature of our underſtandings: We are all of us, ſince the fall of *Adam*, ſubject to many and great miſtakes, inſomuch that *David* cried out, *Pſal.* 19. 12. *Who can underſtand his Errours?* We are ſubject to ſuch great miſtakes, that a man that walks (as he thinks) according to his Light, may commit hainous ſins, when he is perſwaded in his mind that he doth nothing but what he is bound in conſcience to do. When the Apoſtle *Paul* perſecuted the Members of Chriſt, he did not do it from malice, or to pleaſe the Jews, or to get preferment; but he followed his Light, he thought verily that it was his duty to oppoſe the ways and Members of Chriſt, *Acts* 26. 9. *I verily thought with my ſelf, that I ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jeſus of Nazareth.* A man may be ſo far miſtaken, as that he may think he doth God good ſervice, when he is committing abominable ſins. It is an abominable ſin to kill the ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt, yet ſome mens light doth ſo far miſguide them, as that they think they do God ſervice, when they kill his ſervants, *John* 16. 2. *Yea the time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you, will think that he doth God ſervice.* A man may verily think that his ways are right and good, and yet they may be ſuch as will lead him to deſtruction, *Prov.* 14. 12. *There is a way which ſeemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.* And therefore we find God charging us not to lean to our own underſtandings: *Prov.* 3. 5. *Lean not unto thine own underſtanding.* And commanding us to obſerve his Statutes, and not to do ſuch things as are right in our own eyes; *Deut.* 12. 1, 8. *Theſe are the Statutes and Judgments which ye ſhall obſerve to do:*

—*ye*

—*ye ſhall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatſoever is right in his own eyes.*

6. Satan can transform himſelf into an Angel of Light, and ſuggeſt his own evil motions under the name and notion of the dictates and motions of the Spirit of God: 2 *Cor.* 11. 14. *Satan himſelf is transformed into an Angel of Light.* And becauſe Satan can transform himſelf, and make as if he were an Angel of Light, we are commanded not to believe every Spirit, but to try the Spirits, whether they be of God, 1 *John* 4. 1. *Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God.* And by what ſhall we try the Spirits, whether they be of God? This muſt be done by the VVord of God; we muſt have recourſe to the Law and Teſtimonies; what is agreeable to the Scriptures, we muſt own as the Will of God; what is contrary to them, we muſt reject, as coming from the Spirit of Deluſion. *Iſa.* 8. 20. *To the Law and to the Teſtimony; if they ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe there is no Light in them.* VVhatever Light or Spirit would draw us off from, or perſwade us to any thing contrary to *This Word*, that is, the *Law and the Teſtimony*, is to be rejected, as no true Light, nor true Spirit.

7. The Lord commandeth all ſorts of perſons to read the Scriptures, and that not in a ſlight curſory manner, but with diligence and great attention, 1 *Tim.* 4. 13. *Give attendance to reading*——John 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures*——The Greek word ἐρευνᾶτε ſignifies to weigh and conſider diligently what we read, to ſearch into the underſtanding of thoſe things

things that are hidden and abſtruſe. It is the ſame word which is uſed *Rev.* 2,23. *I am he which ſearcheth the heart and reins:* Such a ſearch ſhould we make into the Scriptures, we ſhould labour to have a clear and thorow underſtanding of the moſt abſtruſe and hidden truths, that are wrapped up in the Scriptures. It is not only our duty to read the Scriptures, but to do it daily, *Acts* 17.11. *Theſe were more noble than thoſe in Theſſalonica, in that they received the Word with all readineſs of mind, and ſearched the Scriptures daily.* And to continue reading ſome portion of them every day, as long as we live, *Deut.* 17.18, 19. —*He ſhall write him a copy of this Law in a Book, out of that which is before the Prieſts the Levites, and it ſhall be with him, and he ſhall read therein all the days of his life.* This is ſpoken of the Kings of *Iſrael*, and if they were obliged to get a Copy of the Law, and to read therein all their days, then ſurely other inferiour perſons, that have nothing ſo much buſineſs upon their hands as Kings, are obliged to ſpare ſome time every day, from their occaſions, to read ſome portion of the Scriptures. Beſides our reading the Scriptures privately by our ſelves, God commandeth them to be read publickly in the audience of all the people, both Men, and Women, and Children, *Deut.* 31.11,12. And we find it was the practiſe of the ſervants of God in their publick Aſſemblies, to read the Scriptures, *Joſh.* 8.34,35. *He read all the words of the Law, the Bleſſings and Curſings, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law; there was not a word that Moſes commanded, which Joſhua read not before all the Congregation of Iſrael, with the women, and their little ones, and the ſtrangers that were converſant among them.* And this they did not at ſome extraordinary times only, but it was their conſtant courſe to read

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the Scriptures in their Aſſemblies every Sabbath day, *Acts* 1.13,22. *Moſes of old time hath in every City them that preach him, being read in the Synagogues every Sabbath day.* And our Lord Jeſus approved this practice by his own example, he read the Scriptures to the Jews on the Sabbath days, *Luc.*4.16,17. *And he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up, and as his cuſtom was, he went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath day, and ſtood up for to read, and there was delivered unto him the Book of the Prophet Eſaias.*

8. As all ſorts of perſons are commanded to read the Scriptures, ſo all ſorts of perſons may reap great benefit by reading the Scriptures; Men, VVomen, Children, Strangers, all ſorts of people may learn to fear and obey the Lord, by reading the word of God, *Deut* 31.11,12. *Thou ſhalt read this Law before all Iſrael, Gather the people together, Men, Women, and Children, and the Stranger that is within thy Gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and obſerve to do all the words of this Law.* Reading the Scriptures is an effectual means to beget Repentance, *Neh.*8 8,9. *So they read in the Book, in the Law of God diſtinctly, and gave the ſenſe, and cauſed them to underſtand the reading— All the people wept when they heard the words of the Law:* And Faith, *Acts* 17.11,12. *They received the word with all readineſs of mind, and ſearched the Scriptures daily, whether thoſe things were ſo; Therefore many of them believed.* The Lord hath promiſed his Bleſſing to thoſe that read and practiſe thoſe things which are written in the Scriptures, *Rev.*1.3. *Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they that hear the Words of this Prophecy, and keep thoſe things which are written therein.*

9. The Light that is within us, if it be true Light, teacheth us that we ought to yield obedience to all the

the Commandments of God, and this is one of the Commandments of God, which he doth often inculcate upon us, That we ſhould teach his word unto our Children, and train them up in the knowledge and obedience of his Laws, as hath been already proved from *Deut.*6.6,7. *Theſe words which I command thee this day, ſhall be in thine heart, and thou ſhalt teach them diligently to thy Children*: Pſal. 78. 5. *He eſtabliſhed a Teſtimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Iſrael, which he commanded our Fathers that they ſhould make them known to their Children*: Epheſ.6.4. *And ye Fathers provoke not your Children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* And ſeveral other places. So that if we would follow our Light which we have received from Gods word, that will teach us to inſtruct our Children diligently in the knowledge of the Scriptures.

10. The great ignorance and folly which is in Children, ſhews that they have need of more inſtruction, than to be called upon to follow the Light that is in them; for how little Light have Children before they are inſtructed? God commands his word to be read to Children, and why? *Deut.* 31. 11,13. *Thou ſhalt read this Law before all Iſrael, in their hearing; Gather the People together, men, women, and children——And that their Children which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the Land whither ye go to poſſeſs.* See here how little knowledge is aſcribed unto Children, ——*That their Children which have not known any thing.*— Obſerve alſo what means God preſcribes for the bringing Children to know and fear the Lord, and that is, reading his Law to them; *Thou ſhalt read this Law before all Iſrael in their hearing, that their Children——may hear, and learn to fear the Lord.*

Inſtead

Inſtead of knowledge, there is folly in our Children, and this folly is bound up ſo faſt in their hearts, that it cannot be fetch'd out without inſtruction, *Prov.*8. 33. *Hear inſtruction, and be wiſe* : Neither will inſtruction do it alone, unleſs correction be joyned with inſtruction, *Prov.*22.15. *Fooliſhneſs is bound in the heart of a Child, but the Rod of Correction will drive it far from him*: Prov. 29. 15. *The Rod and Reproof give wiſdom*: But how will that Child prove, that is left to himſelf, and hath neither inſtruction nor correction? The next words will inform us; *But a Child left to himſelf bringeth his Mother to ſhame.* As he that refuſeth to receive inſtrnction, regardeth not, but deſpiſeth his own Soul, *Prov.*15.32. *He that refuſeth inſtruction, deſpiſeth his own Soul*: So he that refuſeth to give inſtruction to his Children, may be ſaid to deſpiſe the ſouls of his Children. For if he did regard them, he would ſeek after their ſalvation, and if he did ſeek after their ſalvation, he would inſtruct them in the knowledge of the Scriptures, which are able to make them wiſe to ſalvation. There being much folly in our Childrens hearts, if we let them live without inſtruction, they will go aſtray, and periſh eternally: *Prov.*10.21. *Fools die for want of wiſdom*: Prov.5.23. *He ſhall die without inſtruction, and in the greatneſs of his folly he ſhall go aſtray.*

Sect.

SECT. 17.

Heb. 8. 11. *explained: It doth not imply Family-Inſtruction, or Miniſterial Teaching, to be needleſs.*

Obj. 17. *IT ſeems a needleſs thing for Parents to teach their Children, or Maſters their Servants, ſeeing the Lord hath promiſed in the times of the Goſpel,* And they ſhall not teach every man his Neighbour, and every man his Brother, ſaying, Know the Lord: for all ſhall know me, from the leaſt to the greateſt, *Heb.* 8. 11.

Anſw. 1. The ſenſe and meaning of this Scripture, *They ſhall not teach every man his Neighbour*, &c. is much perverted, when it is brought to prove either Miniſterial Teaching, or Family-Inſtruction, to be needleſs, and of no uſe in the days of the Goſpel: For,

1. As to the preaching of the Word, the Lord Jeſus will have that continued, and will afford his preſence with this Ordinance till the end of the world, *Matth.* 28 19, 20. *Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghoſt, teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.* Till all that belong to the Election of Grace are brought home to Chriſt, and till all that are brought to Chriſt are made perfect, and are arrived unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs *of Chriſt, God* will have the work of the Miniſtry continued, and Paſtors and Teachers to carry on this work, *Epheſ.* 4. 11, 12, 13. *He gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers, for the perfecting*

fecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt. Now this work will not be fully done till the end of the world.

2. Neither doth this Scripture make void Family-Inſtruction, for the ſame Apoſtle who wrote this Epiſtle to the Hebrews, wherein he ſaith, *They ſhall not teach every man his Neighbour, and every man his Brother*, &c. chargeth Parents in the days of the Goſpel to bring up their Children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, *Eph.6.4.* yea, in this very Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, he ſaith of ſuch as are dull of hearing, *Ye need that one teach you again which be the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God*, Heb.5.12. which he would not have done, if he had thought teaching by men to be needleſs under the days of the Goſpel.

II. When it is ſaid, *They ſhall not teach every man his Neighbour*, &c. The meaning is, they ſhall not only be taught by men, but they ſhall alſo have the teaching of Gods Spirit, whereby the teachings they have from men ſhall be bleſſed, and be made effectual for the conveying of the knowledge of God. Many Examples may be given, where this word *Not*, is not an abſolute negation, but ſignifies *not only*; take one or two: *Hoſ.6.6. I deſired mercy, and not ſacrifice; and the knowledge of God, more than burnt Offerings:* Sacrifice was commanded under the Law, and therefore the meaning cannot be, that God did not at all deſire Sacrifice, but that he did not deſire Sacrifice only, but mercy alſo; or that he deſired mercy more than Sacrifice, as the following words intimate, *And the knowledge of God more than*

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burnt Offerings: John 7.16. *Jesus answered them, My Doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me*: That is, It is not only mine, but also his that sent me.

III. This Scripture may be understood comparatively, of the abundance of knowledge that should be in the times of the Gospel, above what was in the times of the Law: Knowledge doth so abound under the New Testament Administration, that some mean and weak persons, in the time of the Gospel, know as much of Christ crucified, and God reconciled in Christ, and other Gospel-Mysteries, as they that were Teachers of others knew under the Law; *Zach.* 12.8. *He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David.* Knowledge should so abound, that there should seem to be no need of teaching every man his Neighbour, in comparison of what was under the Law, when the Doctrine of the Gospel was wrapped up in so many Types and Shadows, that it was a very hard matter to come to the knowledge of *Christ* Crucified.

IV. That this Scripture doth not make void either Ministerial Teaching, or Family-Instruction, besides what hath been already said, may further be proved,

1. Because God teacheth in the use of means. God could have revealed Himself and his Son in an immediate manner unto *Cornelius*, but he puts him on sending for *Peter* to instruct him, *Acts* 11.13,14. *Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, who shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy House shall be saved.* And it is his Covenant to teach his People, not by his *Spirit* only, or by his *Word* only, but by his *Word and Spirit*, and that as long as the world stands, *Isa.* 59.21. *As for me, this is my Covenant with them, saith the Lord, My Spirit which is*

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upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the mouth of thy Seeds Seed, ſaith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

2. We ſee by ſad experience the great ignorance, and rudeneſs, and dulneſs of thoſe Children and Servants, and of thoſe Families and Places that have no inſtruction: Though they live in Goſpel-times, and in the days of the New Covenant, yet if they have no inſtruction, they are as ignorant as they were that lived under the time of the Old Teſtament.

Sect. 18.

Though ſome Perſons are nothing bettered by inſtruction, yet we muſt continue to inſtruct them.

Object. 18. *WE ſee many Children and Servants that have good inſtruction, prove very vile and corrupt, and are never a whit the better, but rather the worſe for all the pains that is taken with them, and therefore it is to no purpoſe for us to inſtruct our Families.*

Anſw. 1. Though ſome are never a whit the better for the inſtructions and good counſels which are given them, yet others are converted to God, and edified thereby. And who can tell but God may bleſs your labour unto the Converſion and Salvation of thoſe that are under your Charge?

2. If any means under Heaven will do them good, inſtructing them out of the word of God, is the moſt likely way and means to lead them to Repentance: We think if a damned Soul ſhould come out of Hell, and declare what torments it hath felt in Hell, or a Saint ſhould come out of Heaven, and declare what Joys he hath poſſeſs'd in Heaven, this would work

wonderfully upon our Children, towards the leading of them to Repentance; but the word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures, will do more towards the bringing men to Repentance, then the riſing of one from the dead would do, *Luc.* 16. 29, 30, 31. *They have Moſes and the Prophets, let them hear them: And he ſaid, Nay father Abraham, but if one went to them from the dead, they will repent. And he ſaid unto him, If they hear not Moſes and the Prophets, neither will they be perſwaded though one riſe from the dead.* If the Scriptures will not perſwade men to repent and believe, ſuch men would not repent and believe, though Jeſus Chriſt himſelf were on earth to ſpeak to them; *John* 5.46,47. *Had ye believed Moſes, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me; but if ye believe not his writings, how ſhall ye believe my words?*

3. If you ſhould not convert your Children and Servants, but they ſhould ſtill go on in their evil ways, yet it is worth your time and pains to inſtruct and warn them of the danger they are in by reaſon of ſin, for hereby you ſhall deliver your own ſouls from being guilty of their Blood, *Ezek.* 3. 19. *If thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedneſs, nor from his wicked way, he ſhall die in his iniquity, but thou haſt delivered thy Soul.*

4. The word of God is to ſome men the ſavour of death unto death; yet the Miniſters of Chriſt muſt not ceaſe to preach the word, becauſe all that hear them are not converted from their evil ways. And when they diſcharge their work and duty faithfully, they are a ſweet ſavour unto God in thoſe that periſh, as well as in them that are ſaved, 2 *Cor.* 2.15, 16. *We are unto God a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh; to the one we*

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are the ſavour of death unto death, and to the other the ſavour of life unto life. So it is with Maſters of Families, they muſt not deſiſt from Family-Inſtruction, though they ſhould ſee their Children or Servants continuing in their ſins, for if they diſcharge their duty faithfully, and with diligence, though they ſhould have no ſucceſs, they ſhall be accepted of God in Chriſt Jeſus.

SECT. 19.

The fear of aggravating our Childrens Condemnation, ſhould not make us neglect Family-Inſtruction.

Object. 19. *THe more light my Children have, the greater their Condemnation will be, if they make not a good uſe of it; and I am afraid they will not, and therefore I am afraid to inſtruct them, leſt I ſhould aggravate their condemnation.*

Anſw. I. It is true, that the more Light any man hath, the greater his condemnation will be, if he do not make a good uſe of it; *Luc.* 12.47. *That Servant which knew his Lords will, and prepared not himſelf, neither did according to his will, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes.*

II. Though the caſe be ſo, that the more light any man hath, the greater will be his condemnation, yet this muſt not make you neglect inſtructing them, out of fear that they ſhould not improve their light, and ſo have the greater condemnation: For,

1. Some mens ſin and condemnation will be aggravated by the coming of Chriſt into the world; *John* 15.22. *If I had not come and ſpoken unto them, they had not had ſin; but now they have no cloak for their ſin:* Yet God did well in ſending his Son into the world. The preaching of Chriſt and the Goſpel, will make

their condemnation more dreadful, where Christ and the Gospel are not embraced, than the condemnation of the Heathen that never heard of Christ: *John* 3.19. *This is the condemnation, That Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than Light, because their deeds were evil.* See also *Mat.*11. 23,24. Yet the preaching of Christ and the Gospel to the world, is a good work; and God pronounceth a wo against those that he hath called to the Ministry of the Gospel, who preach it not, 1 *Cor.*9. 16. *For necessity is laid upon me, yea wo is unto me if I preach not the Gospel.* Suppose it should increase your Childrens misery in the world to come, to have Light, if they make not a good use of it, yet you do well when you instruct them; yea a necessity is laid upon you, and wo be unto you if you do it not.

2. You run a greater hazard both of your own and your Childrens condemnation, by neglecting to instruct them, than you do of aggravating their condemnation in case you should instruct them, when as you do not know whether they will make a good use of their Light: You hazard your own condemnation by neglecting your duty, and your Childrens by nursing them up in ignorance; but by instructing them, you may promote both your own and their salvation, 1 *Tim* 4.16. The same argument that the Apostle useth to perswade Wives to dwell with their Husbands, and Husbands to dwell with their Wives, 1 *Cor.*7.16. *For what knowest thou, O Wife, whether thou shalt save thy Husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, but thou shalt save thy Wife?* The like may I use with Parents to instruct their Children, notwithstanding all their fears of aggravating their condemnation, *What knowest thou whether thou shalt save thy Children?*

III. Whereas Satan would beat you off from instructing

ſtructing your Children, by putting you in fear that you ſhall thereby aggravate their condemnation, this is but a vain ſuggeſtion, to hinder you in your duty; for you can't take a more effectual courſe to prevent your Childrens condemnation, and to promote their ſalvation, than to inſtruct them in the knowledge of the Scriptures; for Knowledge is a means to breed Faith, *Pſal.*9.10. *They that know thy Name, will put their truſt in thee:* and true Repentance, *Jer.*24.7. *I will give them an heart to know me, ——for they ſhall return unto me with their whole heart:* and to obtain Remiſſion of ſins, *Iſa.*53.11. *By his Knowledge ſhall my Righteous Servant juſtifie many——* Knowledge alſo is a means of obtaining eternal life, *John* 17.3. *And this is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.*

SECT. 20.

Family-Inſtruction will prevent, not ſpread Errours. How ſuch as teach others may be kept from perverting or corrupting the Word of God.

Object.20. *THis will be the way to ſpread and multiply Errors, for illiterate men to take upon them to inſtruct their Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures.*

Anſw. I. It doth highly concern all Miſters of Families, as well as Miniſters of the Word, to be very careful that they do not teach any falſe and erronious Doctrine unto thoſe whom God hath committed to their charge. This would bring down a curſe inſtead of a bleſſing, yea though they ſhould ſeem like Angels, yet would they be accurſed, if they perverted the Goſpel of Chriſt, *Gal.*1.7,8. *There be ſome that trouble you, and would pervert the Goſpel of Chriſt, but though we or an Angel from heaven preach any other Goſpel unto you——let him be accurſed.*

The Apoſtle was ſo deſirous to prevent the ſpreading of falſe Doctrine, that he earneſtly beſought *Timothy* to ſtay on purpoſe at *Epheſus*, to charge in a ſolemn manner thoſe that he ſaw inclinable to Errours, to teach no other Doctrine but what was agreeable to the Doctrine of the Goſpel; 1 *Tim.*1. 3,4. *As I beſought thee to abide ſtill at Epheſus when I went into Macedonia, that thou mighteſt charge ſome that they teach no other Doctrine, ſo do.* Such as teach lies inſtead of truth, are accounted by God the baſeſt and vileſt of men, and therefore are compared not to the Head, but the Tail; *Iſa.*9.14,15. *Therefore the Lord will cut off from Iſrael Head and Tail, Branch and Ruſh in one day: The Ancient and Honourable he is the Head, and the Prophet that teacheth lies he is the Tail.* When they that are Leaders of others do cauſe them to erre, inſtead of promoting their ſalvation, they will be the cauſe of their deſtruction, *Iſa.*9.16. *For the Leaders of this People cauſe them to erre, and they that are led of them are deſtroyed.*

If you ask,

What ſhall we do, that we may be kept from corrupting and perverting the word of God when we inſtruct our Families?

I anſwer:

1. Pray to God with humble and lowly hearts to give you his holy ſpirit; God hath promiſed his holy ſpirit to them that ask it, *Luc.*11.13. *If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?* And when God hath given you his holy Spirit, he will make and keep your minds ſound in the Faith: He is ſtiled, *The Spirit of Power, and of Love, and of a Sound Mind,* 2 Tim.1.7.

2. See

2. See that your hearts be right and sincere with God, and that you walk before God in truth and uprightness; do all your works, and speak all your words as in the sight of God, and then he will guide you by the Spirit of Truth into all Truth, and keep you from corrupting his holy word, 2 *Cor.* 2. 17. *For we are not as many which corrupt the word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.*

3. Purifie your hearts and minds from all corrupt Lusts. VVhen a man hath a corrupt mind, he will be apt to put corrupt glosses upon the vvord of God. VVhen he can't bring up his VVill to Gods, he will be ready to interpret Gods Mind according to his own VVill. The Apostle conjoyns these two, *Men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the Truth,* 1 Tim. 6. 5. Now if you would purifie your minds, 1. Have faith in Christ, *Acts* 15. 19. *And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.* 2. Obey those Truths vvhich *God* hath revealed to you, 1 *Pet.* 1. 22. *Ye have purified your Souls in obeying the Truth.*

4. Take heed of departing from the simplicity of the *Gospel*, under the notion of seeking after more sublime spiritual and mysterious Truths. The Apostle vvas jealous lest the *Corinthians* should be corrupted this vvay, 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. *But I fear lest by any means, as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your mind should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

5. Keep to the Analogy of Faith, *Rom.* 12. 6. *Having then Gifts, differing according to the Grace that is given to us, whether Prophecy, let us propheſie, according to the proportion of faith:* By propheſying here, most understand not the gift of fore-telling things to

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What ſhall we do, that we may be kept from corrupting and perverting the word of God when we inſtruct our Families?

I anſwer:

1. Pray to God with humble and lowly hearts to give you his holy ſpirit; God hath promiſed his holy ſpirit to them that ask it, *Luc.*11.13. *If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?* And when God hath given you his holy Spirit, he will make and keep your minds ſound in the Faith: He is ſtiled, *The Spirit of Power, and of Love, and of a Sound Mind*, 2 Tim.1.7.

2. See

2. See that your hearts be right and sincere with God, and that you walk before God in truth and uprightness; do all your works, and speak all your words as in the sight of God, and then he will guide you by the Spirit of Truth into all Truth, and keep you from corrupting his holy word, 2 *Cor.* 2. 17. *For we are not as many which corrupt the word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.*

3. Purifie your hearts and minds from all corrupt Lusts. VVhen a man hath a corrupt mind, he will be apt to put corrupt glosses upon the vvord of God. VVhen he can't bring up his VVill to Gods, he will be ready to interpret Gods Mind according to his own VVill. The Apostle conjoyns these two, *Men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the Truth,* 1 Tim. 6. 5. Now if you would purifie your minds, 1. Have faith in Christ, *Acts* 15. 19. *And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.* 2. Obey those Truths vvhich *God* hath revealed to you, 1 *Pet.* 1. 22. *Ye have purified your Souls in obeying the Truth.*

4. Take heed of departing from the simplicity of the *Gospel*, under the notion of seeking after more sublime spiritual and mysterious Truths. The Apostle vvas jealous lest the *Corinthians* should be corrupted this vvay, 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. *But I fear lest by any means, as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your mind should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

5. Keep to the Analogy of Faith, *Rom.* 12. 6. *Having then Gifts, differing according to the Grace that is given to us, whether Prophecy, let us prophesie, according to the proportion of faith:* By propheſying here, most understand not the gift of fore-telling things to

come, but the Gift of interpreting and explaining the Scriptures, as the word is used, 1 *Cor.*14.3. *He that propheſieth, ſpeaketh unto men unto edification, and exhortation, and comfort.* Now the Apoſtle adviſeth that this propheſying be according to the proportion or analogy of Faith; by propheſying according to the analogy of Faith, we may underſtand that no Scripture ſhould be ſo expounded as to contradict any Article of our Faith, or Precepts of an holy godly life.

6. Be ſober-minded, and do not exerciſe your ſelves in thoſe things which are too high for you, *Pſal.*131.1. Underſtand well your ſelves, what you undertake to teach your Families. The Apoſtle gives this character of ſome in his time, *deſiring to be teachers of the Law, underſtanding neither what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm*, 1 Tim. 1,7. When we teach our Families thoſe things which we underſtand, and fully believe upon the evidence and demonſtration of the Word and Spirit of God, and alſo thoſe things which we know experimentally to be true, we need not fear leading them into errors. See more Directions for getting a right underſtanding of the Scriptures, and preventing our wreſting of them, in the Anſwer to Object.12. Chap. iv. Sect. 12. pag.243, 244,245.

II. This work of inſtructing our Families in the knowledge of the Scriptures, wiſely managed, will be ſo far from increaſing errors, that it will be a great means of preventing their falling into error, and will eſtabliſh them in the truth, that they ſhall not be ſhaken and carried to and fro with every wind of Doctrine. The Lord Jeſus, as hath been already hinted, tells us, That the errors of the Saduces did ariſe from their ignorance of the Scriptures, *Matth.* 22.29.

22.29. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* And the ſame paſſage is recorded by another Evangeliſt, *Mark* 12.24. *Jeſus anſwering, ſaid unto them, Do ye not therefore err, becauſe ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God?*

SECT. 21.

There is more work lieth upon Parents, than to teach or hear their Children read the Scriptures.

Object. 21. *WE do teach our Children to read the Scriptures, and we do read the Word of God every day in our Families, and do call upon our Children to read the Word of God both alone by themſelves, and ſometimes to us in our hearing, and is not this enough? What would you have us do more?*

Anſw. All this is very good, yet it is needful that you ſhould do ſomewhat more than this, if you deſire to train them up in the Knowledge and Obedience of the Scriptures: As,

I. Chuſe out for them ſuch plain Texts of Scripture as do prove and confirm the Articles of our Faith, and ſuch Precepts as may guide and direct them to lead an holy life, and ſuch Promiſes as may encourage them to truſt in God for all good things, and ſupport them under all ſorts of troubles, and ſuch Threatnings as may deter them from thoſe ſins they are inclined to, or are in danger to be drawn to, when they ſhall be removed from under your Charge. Chuſe out alſo for them ſuch Scriptures as may ſhew them their ſinful and miſerable condition by nature, their need of Jeſus Chriſt, and of the regenerating Grace of God, the excellency, neceſſity, and advantage of a holy Life, *&c.*

If

If you ſet a whole Loaf, or a whole Diſh of Meat before a Child that is not able to carve for himſelf, he receives no benefit thereby; but if you cut out for him, and lay before him what you judge to be convenient for him, he feeds on it, and is nouriſhed: So it is here, if you chuſe out ſome particular portions of Scripture, ſuch as you ſhall judge moſt ſuitable and fit to inſtruct your Children either in matters of Faith or Practice: This will tend more to their edification, than Reading of whole Chapters to them, without making application of any particular paſſages therein, after you have read to them, or they have read a Chapter in your hearing. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of it as a great commendation in a Miniſter, as that which doth approve him both to God and men, to divide the Word of Truth aright, 2 *Tim.* 2.15. *Study to ſhew thy ſelf approved unto God, a Workman that needeth not to be aſhamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.* *Grotius* gives this interpretation of the Greek word, *Evangelium* ὀρθοτομεῖ, *qui cuique accomodat ea monita quæ ei maxime conveniunt*: He divides the Word of Truth aright, that applies to every one thoſe Inſtructions which are moſt ſuitable to him, and convenient for him. And as this is the commendation of a Miniſter, ſo alſo of the Maſter of a Family, to apply ſuch portions of Scripture to all the Members of his Family, as are ſuitable and proper for every one of them. Our Lord Jeſus accounts it both wiſdom and faithfulneſs in a Steward,

1. To give out portions of meat to every one in the Houſe.

2. To give every one *Their* portion; that is, that which is allowed them by their Maſter, that which

which belongs to them, that which is ſuitable and convenient for them.

3. To do this in due ſeaſon: *Luc.*12.42. *And the Lord ſaid, Who then is that faithful and wiſe ſteward, whom his Lord ſhall make Ruler over his Houſhold, to give them their portion of Meat in due ſeaſon?*

II. Open the ſenſe and meaning of thoſe portions of Scripture which you make choice of for their inſtruction. Thus our Lord Jeſus inſtructed his Diſciples; he did not only quote Scriptures out of *Moſes* and the Prophets, to prove that he was the *Meſſias*, that he muſt ſuffer before he entred into glory, *&c.* But he expounded the ſenſe and meaning of thoſe Scriptures, *Luc.*24.27. *And beginning at Moſes, and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himſelf:* And this opening of the Scriptures which he produced, did much affect their hearts, verſ.32. *Did not our hearts burn within us,——while he opened to us the Scriptures?* The Eunuch who was a man of great Authority under *Candace* Queen of the *Ethiopians*, and had the charge of all her treaſure, (and if he had not been a wiſe man, it is probable he would not have been placed in ſo great authority) who was alſo a devout man, and came as far as *Jeruſalem* to worſhip God, acknowledged that he could not underſtand the Scriptures without being guided into the ſenſe and meaning of what he read: when he was reading in the Prophet *Eſaias*, and *Philip* ſaid unto him, *Underſtandeſt thou what thou readeſt? He ſaid unto him, How can I, except ſome man ſhould guide me?* Acts 8. 27,30,31. If ſuch a great man, ſuch a devout man as this Eunuch was, needed one to guide him into the underſtanding

ing of the Scriptures, what need have our Children and Servants of having thoſe Scriptures wherein they are inſtructed, opened and explained to them.

III. Endeavour to fix thoſe things in their memories which you teach them, by cauſing them often to rehearſe thoſe portions of Scripture wherein they have been inſtructed. The Apoſtle *Peter* endeavoured that they whom he inſtructed might keep what he had taught them always in remembrance, 2 *Pet.* 1. 15. *Moreover I will endeavour that you may be able after my deceaſe to have theſe things always in your remembrance.* So ſhould you labour to imprint thoſe things in their memories which you teach your Children, that after you are dead, and can inſtruct them no more, they may remember what you have taught while you lived with them.

IV. Apply the Word of God to them, when you read the Scriptures in your Families, as the Prophet *Malachy* did his Meſſage that he delivered to the Prieſts, *Mal.* 2. 1, 2. *And now, O ye Prieſts, this Commandment is for you; if ye will not hear, if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my Name, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, I will even ſend a curſe upon you, and I will curſe your bleſſings.* Whether it be a word of Command, or Promiſe, or Threatning, or an Example of Gods Judgments on ſinners, or of his bleſſing beſtowed on his ſervants, tell them, That *theſe Commandments, O my Children, the great God that made you, and that will bring you to Judgment, hath given to you; if you obey them, he will love you and bleſs you, and give you all good things in this world, and great bleſſings in the world to come: But if you will not hearken to his Voice, but caſt his Law behind your backs, he will ſend many heavy Judgments and great Plagues upon you in this world, and if they do not lead you to repentance, he will*

caſt

caſt you both Body and Soul into Hell Fire. And ſo for the Promiſes, tell them, *Theſe great and precious Promiſes ſhall be your portion, if you will believe in Jeſus Chriſt, and live holy and godly lives,* Gal. 3. 22. 1 Tim. 4. 8. Do the like by the Threatnings, tell them, *That theſe will ſurely be executed on them, if they live in thoſe ſins againſt which ſuch and ſuch Judgments are threatned: For GOD is faithful, and able to perform his Word, and is no Reſpecter of perſons, and there is no lying hid from his all-ſeeing Eye, nor any poſſibility to eſcape out of His Hand.* VVhen you meet with Examples of Gods Judgments on impenitent ſinners, tell them, *Thoſe Examples are recorded on purpoſe to keep them from falling into ſuch ſins,* 1 Cor. 10. 5, 6. *and to lead them to Repentance,* Luk. 13. 1, 2, 3. *And that if they live in the ſame ſins, they muſt expect to meet with the ſame Judgments.* And ſo alſo the Examples of Gods mercies towards his ſervants, tell them, *That if they will ſerve God, the ſame mercies and bleſſings that God gave* Abraham, *or* David, *or any other of his ſervants, he will give them.*

But of theſe things I have ſpoken before more largely in the Third Chapter, and it will be needleſs to repeat them again. By what hath been ſaid there, it is evident that there is much more work lieth upon Parents beſides teaching them to read the Scriptures; as, VVatching over them, Reproof, Correction, *&c.*

Sect.

Sect. 22.

Instructing Children while they are young, makes eminent Saints.

Object. 22. *WE may teach our Children to know and remember the Scriptures, but we can't teach them obedience, that is Gods work; and what good will it do them to know and remember the Word, if they do not obey it? And besides, if they should whilst they are young walk in the ways of God, they will forsake them when they grow old, and be the worse for their instruction, and make good the old Proverb,* A young Saint, and an old Devil.

Answ. 1. It is true, that it is Gods work to teach our Children Obedience, but we must use the means. Shall the Ministers of the Gospel forbear preaching the word, because the conversion of souls is Gods work, not theirs?

2. God doth ordinarily bless the Endeavours of Parents and Masters of Families, when they are diligent and faithful in their work, not only to the breeding of knowledge, but also to the bringing of their Children and Servants to obey the Lord, and walk in his ways, *Gen.* 18. 19. *He will command his Children and Household after him, and they SHALL keep the way of the Lord to do Justice and Judgment.*—— Here God promiseth that upon *Abrahams* commanding his Children and Household, they should keep the way of the Lord. And what God promiseth to *Abraham*, he promiseth and will peform unto all that walk in *Abrahams* steps. If persons that have had Religious Education, would consult their own experience, they will find that generally God instils Prin-

Principles of Grace into such as are converted, by means of their Religious Education.

3. That Proverb, *A young Saint and an old Devil*, was of Satans coining, to deter persons from seeking and serving the Lord, for it is contrary to the word of God, for that saith, *Prov.*22.6. *Train up a Child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* None prove such eminent Saints as they that begin to seek and serve the Lord whilst they are young. I will give two or three instances hereof: *Josiah* was a very humble tender-hearted Prince, he wept at the hearing of Gods Law, 2 *Kings* 23.18,19. He was very zealous in the Reformation of Religion, and destroying Idolatry, Chap.xxiii. ver.1. to 25. There never was such a Passover kept either in the days of the Judges, or of the Kings of *Israel* or *Judah*, as *Josiah* kept, 2 *Kings* 23.22,23. He excelled all the Kings that lived before him, and all that came after him, verse 25. *And like unto him there was no King before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses, neither after him arose there any like him.* And as he was thus eminent in Godliness, so he continued constant to his dying day: 2 *Chron.*34.2. *He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his Father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor left.* And one reason why he proved so eminent and constant in the ways of God, was this, He began while he was young to seek after the Lord, as is expressed in the following verse, *For in the eighth year of his Reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his Father.* *Obadiah*, who feared the Lord from his youth, 1 *Kin.* 18.12. *I thy Servant fear the Lord from my youth*; attained

tained unto a great measure of the fear of God, verse 3. *Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly:* He kept his Integrity though he lived in *Ahabs* House, who was such a wicked Prince, that he did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord. He was a great shelter to the Lords Prophets when they were persecuted, and some of them put to death by *Jezabel*, he hid an hundred Prophets in a Cave, and maintained them with Bread and VVater, verse 4. *David* began to seek and trust in God while he was young, *Psal.* 71.5. *Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my Trust from my youth:* And we know he proved a man after Gods own heart, the instances of his exemplary piety are so many, that it would be too long, and so well known, that it would be needless to mention them.

Sect. 23.

How to deal with Servants that hold Erronious Opinions.

Object. 23. *Some of my Servants are tainted with Erronious Principles, which I knew not of, when I took them into my Family; and I look upon it as labour in vain to instruct persons that are infected with Errors.*

Answ. 1. It may be their Lot was cast under your Roof, that you might convert them to the knowledge and belief of the Truth; therefore try both by convincing Scriptures, and by a convincing Conversation, to recover them from the Error of their ways. And for your better Encouragement, consider,

1. VVhat a blessed and glorious work it is to reduce a man from Error to Truth, and to bring back a strag-

ſtragling ſheep to the fold of Chriſt; by ſo doing you will be inſtrumental to ſave a ſoul, *Jam.* 5. 19, 20. *Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth a ſinner from the error of his way, ſhall ſave a Soul from death, and ſhall hide a multitude of ſins.*

2. If you ſet your hearts to this work, and labour diligently in it, it is very probable that God will make you ſucceſsful. There is a promiſe that ſuch as err, ſhall be brought to the knowledge of the truth, *Iſa.*29.24. *They alſo that erred in ſpirit ſhall come to underſtanding, and they that murmured ſhall learn Doctrine.* And what is a more likely way to obtain this promiſe, than to be diligent in uſing means to reclaim thoſe that err from the Truth?

II. If you have not parts and abilities ſufficient to convince them of their Errors, and to perſwade them to embrace the Truth, get ſome others that have greater abilities then your ſelves to deal with them, eſpecially ſome godly Miniſters who may be able by ſound Doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainſayers, *Tit.*1.9.

III. If they remain obſtinate, and either will not be inſtructed, or after inſtruction perſiſt in their erronious Opinions, remove them out of your Families, 2 *John* 10. *If there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your Houſe.*—— If perſons that teach falſe Doctrine are not to be received into our Houſes, then ſuch as have embraced falſe Doctrine, and do pertinaciouſly adhere thereunto, are to be caſt out of our Houſes. What the Apoſtle adviſeth concerning Church Cenſures, *Tit.*3.10. *A man that is an Heretick, after the firſt and ſecond admonition, reject.* The ſame may ſuit in this caſe, if your ſervants hold dangerous Errors,

and after ſeveral admonitions, and much means uſed to reclaim them, do obſtinately adhere to their corrupt Principles, caſt them out of your Families, leſt they leaven the whole Family with their evil Opinions, 1 *Cor.* 5. 6. *Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*

Sect. 24.

They that neglect Family-Inſtruction are worſe than Infidels and Idolaters: Though others neglect this work, we muſt not.

Object. 24. *None of my Neighbours do take this pains with their Families, and why then ſhould I? Would you have me ſingular? That is the way to be laugh'd to ſcorn, and to be under reproach?*

Anſw. 1. Take heed of bearing falſe witneſs againſt your Neighbour; it may be ſeveral of your Neighbours make conſcience of this duty of teaching and inſtructing their Families, though you know it not. It is a grievous ſlander to ſay, None of your Neighbours take any care of their Families to teach them to know and ſerve the Lord, it is in effect to ſay they are as bad or worſe than Infidels, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. *If any provide not for his own, eſpecially for thoſe of his own Houſe, he hath denied the faith, and is worſe than an Infidel.* The Soul is of far greater value than the Body, and if ſo, then the neglecting to provide for the Souls of thoſe of our own Houſe, is a greater ſin than the neglecting to provide for their Bodies. Idolaters train up and employ their whole Families to ſerve their Idols, *Jer.* 7. 18. *The Children gather wood, and the Fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their Dough, to make Cakes to the Queen of Heaven,*

ven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. Here are men, women, and children, all employed about the ſervice of idol gods: If Idolaters train up their children to ſerve their idol gods, are not they worſe than Idolaters, who will not train up their Families to know and ſerve the true God? So that you charge your Neighbours with a very great ſin, and an high crime, when you ſay that none of them inſtruct their Families.

2. Suppoſe none of your Neighbours ſhould inſtruct their Families, yet you muſt inſtruct yours: *Joſhua* reſolved that though all *Iſrael* ſhould neglect the ſervice of the true God, and turn aſide to idols, yet he and his Houſe would ſerve the Lord, *Joſh.*24. 15. *And if it ſeem evil unto you to ſerve the Lord, chuſe you whom you will ſerve, whether the Gods which your Fathers ſerved, that were on the other ſide of the Flood, or the Gods of the Amorites in whoſe Lands ye dwell; but as for me and my Houſe, we will ſerve the Lord.* Your Neighbours neglect of their duty will not excuſe you at the day of Judgment, nor ſhelter you from the wrath of God, nor mitigate your Torments in Hell, if you ſuffer your Families to die in ignorance, and ſo to periſh eternally for want of inſtruction.

3. You are not ſingular in this work, for the wiſeſt, the moſt holy, the beſt men that ever lived, have been careful to train up their Families in the knowledge and fear of the Lord, as *Abraham*, Gen. 18.19. *David*, Pſal.34.11. *Joſhua*, Joſh.24.15. Yea which of all the Saints and Servants of God ever neglected it?

4. Suppoſe your Neighbours ſhould reproach you for inſtructing your Families, and call you I y

any odious names, this ſhould not at all diſhearten you from this good work of Family-Inſtruction: For,

1. It is a bleſſed and happy thing to ſuffer reproach for doing any work that Jeſus Chriſt ſets us about; 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. *If ye be reproached for the Name of Chriſt, happy are ye; for the Spirit of Glory and of God reſteth upon you; on their part he is evil ſpoken of, but on your part he is glorified*: Matth. 5. 11, 12. *Bleſſed are ye, when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſly for my ſake, rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven.*

2. In this work you do Chriſt ſervice, and thoſe that ſerve Chriſt ſhall be honoured by God, *John* 12. 26. —— *If any man ſerve me, him will my Father honour.* And if God honour you, you need not care who deſpiſeth or reproacheth you.

Sect. 25.

How to deal with ſuch as refuſe Inſtruction.

Object. 25. *I Would very willingly inſtruct my Family, if they were willing to be inſtructed, but my Family will not ſubmit to inſtruction; and what can I do in this caſe?*

Anſw. 1. Enquire whence it comes to paſs, that God afflicts you with this ſore Judgment of rebellious Children and Servants, that will not ſubmit to inſtruction: When God makes any members of our Families prove Croſſes to us, he is uſually bringing ſome ſin to our remembrance, and chaſtiſing us for it, as hath been already hinted, *Object.* 5. *Anſw.* 1.

2. Pray to God to turn and bow their hearts to be willing to embrace inſtruction. What *Solomon* ſaith of

of the heart of a King, *Prov.* 21.1. *The Kings heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the Rivers of Water, he turneth it whitherſoever he will.* The ſame is true of the hearts of all other men, they are in the Lords hand, and he turneth and diſpoſeth of them as he pleaſeth. Though your Children or Servants ſhould be never ſo vile, perfect ſlaves to Sin and Satan, oppoſite to all that is good, God can change their hearts and make them come and ſubmit themſelves to you, and deſire to be inſtructed by you in thoſe things that concern their ſalvation, *Rev.* 3.9. *Behold I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan,——behold I will make them to come and worſhip before thy feet.*——What a great and ſudden change did God work on the Jayler's heart? Before God touched his heart, he dealt harſhly and ruggedly with the Apoſtles,. *He thruſt them into the inner priſon, and made their feet faſt in the ſtocks*, Acts 16.24. but when God came to awaken him, before one night had paſſed over his head, he was ſo altered that he came trembling, and fell down at the Apoſtles feet, and deſired to be inſtructed what courſe he ſhould take to ſave his ſoul, verſ. 29,30. *He called for a light, and ſprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out & ſaid, Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved?*

3. After you have prayed to God, watch your opportunities, wherein it is moſt probable they will liſten to you, as in ſickneſs, or when they are under ſome other affliction, or in a great ſtorm of Thunder and Lightning, or under any other awakening Providence, and when you find them in a tractable frame, deal effectually with them, ſet home upon their hearts the greatneſs of their ſin, in refuſing inſtruction, and to that end put them in mind of theſe Scriptures, *Prov.* 1,24,25,26,27,28,31. & 15.32. *Jer.* 6.8.

In times of diſtreſs God is wont to open mens ears to diſcipline, which are ſhut againſt good counſel in the day of proſperity; *Job* 36.8,10. *If they be holden in the cords of affliction, he openeth their ear to diſcipline.* When there were mighty thundrings and lightnings in the Land of *Egypt*, *Pharaoh* though he was a man of a hard heart, ſent for *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and humbled himſelf for his ſins, and deſired their prayers, *Exod.*9.27,28. The Prophet *Jeremiah* likeneth unruly perſons that will not liſten to and obey ſuch Inſtructions as are given them out of the word, unto the wild Aſs, *Jer.*2.24. *A wild Aſs uſed to the Wilderneſs, that ſnuffeth up the wind at her pleaſure, in her occaſion who can turn her away? All they that ſeek her, will not weary themſelves: In her month they ſhall find her.* As the wild Aſs that is uſed to the wilderneſs wanders up and down at her pleaſure, and cannot be tamed till her month come; that is, till ſhe grows big with young, and is weary and heavy pained with the burden that ſhe carries, and then it is eaſie to find her out, and deal with her. So it is with ſome ſinners, though they be as wild and as unruly as the Aſs that is uſed to the Wilderneſs, and there is no turning of them whilſt they are in their proſperity, and when they have their occaſions and opportunities of ſinning; yet when their month comes, when they are burdened with afflictions, and involved in ſuch ſtreights & difficulties, that they cannot tell what to do to wind out of them, then it is eaſie having acceſs to them. Wherefore if you have unruly Servants, or unruly Children, watch your ſeaſons to deal with them; and when God ſtrikes fear and terrour into their hearts by any providence, do you ſtrike in with your inſtruction.

4. If you cannot do any good to them by inſtruction,

ction, endeavour to win them to Chriſt by a pious, heavenly, exemplary converſation. There is great force in a godly converſation, to gain upon ſuch perſons as ſtand out againſt and ſhew much oppoſition to the word of God, 1 *Pet.* 3. 1. *Likewiſe ye Wives be in ſubjection to your own Husbands; that if any obey not the Word, they alſo may without the Word be won by the converſation of the Wives.*

5. Deſire ſome godly Miniſters to deal with them, if you cannot prevail with them your ſelves to ſubmit to inſtruction. It may be God will bleſs the Counſel, the Reproof, the Exhortations that his Miniſters ſhall give your Children and Servants, if you make known your caſe to them, and deſire them to deal with your Families, and to convince them out of Gods word that it is their duty, and will conduce much unto their good, to ſubmit to inſtruction. It is ſaid of *John Baptiſt*, who was one of Chriſts Miniſters, *Luke* 1. 17. *He ſhall go before him in the ſpirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the Diſobedient to the wiſdom of the Juſt.* And the like is promiſed *Mal.* 4. 6. *He ſhall turn the hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the hearts of the Children to the Fathers, leſt I come and ſmite the Earth with a Curſe.* And what was promiſed to *John* the *Baptiſt*, the ſame good effect may we expect from the endeavours of other godly Miniſters, namely, that God will bleſs their labours to the converſion of our Children.

6. If they be your Children that refuſe to be inſtructed, correct them. The Rod may do that which words will not do. *Solomon* adviſeth to apply the Rod to ſuch as are fools, *Prov.* 26. 3. —*A Rod for the fools back.* Now if you would know whom he accounts fools, you ſhall find they are ſuch as re-

fuſe and deſpiſe inſtruction, *Prov.*15.5. *A fool deſpiſeth his fathers inſtruction:* And *Prov.* 1.7. *Fools deſpiſe wiſdom and inſtruction.* Now the Rod of Correction will fetch this folly out of the hearts of your Children, *Prov.* 22.15. If they be your Servants that refuſe inſtruction, as ſoon as you can with a good conſcience, diſmiſs them from your ſervice. *David's* care was to get good Servants, and if any of them proved vitious, and would not be reclaimed, he caſt them out of his Family, *Pſal.* 101. 6,7. *Mine eyes ſhall be upon the faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me; he that walketh in a perfect way, he ſhall ſerve me; he that worketh deceit, ſhall not dwell within my Houſe; he that telleth lies, ſhall not tarry in my ſight.* Imitate this example of *David*, get godly Servants, or at leaſt endeavour to make them godly after they are come under your Roof; and if they be ſuch as will not be inſtructed and reformed, remove them; and make this Covenant with all that you ſhall admit for time to come, That they ſubmit unto inſtruction.

Sect. 26.

What they ſhould do who find no ſucceſs on their Labours in teaching their Families? Several Encouragements to ſuch to continue this work of Family-Inſtruction.

Object.26. *I Have taken great pains in teaching my Family, but I ſee no ſucceſs of my Labours; I can't find that any of them are reformed and turned from their ſins, or have got any ſaving work of Grace upon their ſouls, notwithſtanding all the pains that I have taken with them: And this diſcourageth me, and makes me think ſometimes to give over this work.*

*Anſw.*1. If there be no ſucceſs of your Labours in your Family, ſee if the cauſe be not in your

ſelves:

ſelves: Do you water your ſeed that you ſow with your Prayers and Tears? Do you wraſtle with God for a bleſſing? Are you fervent in prayer for the converſion and edification of ſuch as are under your charge? Do you ſhew a good example to your Family, and walk convincingly before them, and teach them by your converſation? Do you go about this work in the Name of the Lord, relying on his ſtrength, and depending on his aſſiſtance, and looking for his preſence with you? Do you watch over their Converſations, as well as teach them? Do you reprove and correct your Children when they walk contrary to the word of God? Do you inſtruct your Families diligently, ſeriouſly, frequently? Or is this work done but ſeldom, and in a ſlight manner? Do you labour to know their ſtate, and to apply that which is ſuitable to them, and profitable for them? If the ground and cauſe why you have no better ſucceſs, be in your ſelves, reform that which hinders your ſucceſs, and you ſhall ſoon find the bleſſing of God going along with your Labours.

2. If the cauſe of your Families unprofitableneſs lie in themſelves; 1. Shew them what a great ſin, and how dangerous it is, to be unprofitable under the means of grace; and turn them to ſuch Scriptures as theſe, *Matth.*3.10. & 25.30. *Luc.*13.6,7. *Heb.*6.7,8. and preſs them home upon their conſciences. 2. Direct them what means they ſhould uſe that they may profit better by your inſtructions: what they are, I have hinted already in *Chap.iii.Direct.*15. *pag.*165.

3. There may be good ſucceſs of your Labours though you perceive it not; the Lord may have conveyed the ſeed of grace into their Souls, by your Inſtruction, though you diſcover it not; and it may

may grow, though you discern it not; *Mark* 4.26, 27. *So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, and he knoweth not how.* God many times distils his Grace like dew, in a silent insensible manner, *Hos.*14.5. *I will be as the dew unto Israel.*

4. Your want of success should be so far from causing you to desist from this work of Family-Instruction, that it should stir you up to ply your work with greater diligence, and cause you to abound in actings of faith upon those Promises where the Lord hath promised to bless and prosper his peoples labours. I will mention three or four to this purpose. *Isa.*65.22,23. *Mine Elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands, they shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble*: Psal.1.3. *Whatsoever he doth shall prosper*, 1 Tim.4.13,16. *Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine: Take heed to thy self, unto thy Doctrine, continue in them, for in doing this, thou shalt both save thy self and them that hear thee.* Deut.15.10. *The Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.* The less success and blessing you find attending your labours, be the more earnest in pleading such Promises as these are, and the more abundant in acting faith upon them.

5. Though you can't see any fruit of your Labours either in the conversion or edification of any that are under your charge, but do apprehend that your labour hath hitherto been in vain, yet you must not desist from this good work of teaching and instructing your Families, but continue therein as long as you live. And that you may not sit down under discouragement and give over instructing your Families, because you do not find success in your

your work; Let me propose to you these following Considerations.

I. Consider that God often renews and repeats the same means and ways to bring about our Conversion, though former means have not prevailed with us to lead us to repentance, *Job* 33. 29, 30. *Lo all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his Soul from the Pit, to be inlightned with the light of the Living.* God takes great pains with one and the same man, to bring back his Soul from the Pit; *He worketh*, He doth not only call, or counsel and perswade, but *He worketh, these things, all these things*; that is, He worketh by his Word, v. 23. and by variety of Providences, Mercies, Afflictions, *&c.* mentioned in the fore-going verses; and not only once or twice, but *oftentimes*: And there is a note of attention prefixed to this, that we may give the greater heed to it, *LO*! Now if God taketh great pains, and worketh oftentimes by the same ways and means, with one and the same man, to bring back his Soul from the Pit, shall we think much day by day to instruct our Families, and to continue so doing, that we may be instrumental to save their Souls, though hitherto we have seen no success of our Labours?

II. Though you see no fruit of your labours for the present, yet you may do before you die, *Gal.* 6. 9. *Let us not be weary of well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.* Yea though you should see none whilst you live, yet after you are dead, your Children may remember what you taught them whilst you lived, and may thereby be brought to believe in Christ, and repent of their sins. After Christ was dead, his Disciples were much helped in their faith by calling to remembrance what he had taught them in his life-time: *John* 2. 22. *When therefore*

fore he was risen from the dead, his Disciples remembred that he had said this unto them; and they believed the Scriptures, and the word which Jesus had spoken. Though the Seed of the Word seem to lie dead in their hearts for the present, yet possibly God may quicken it by some affliction. *Manasseh* was *Hezekiah's* Son, and so doubtless had good instructions from his Father, but yet he proved very vitious, till he came into affliction; he shed much innocent blood, he dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards, and used inchantments and witchcrafts, he was a great Idolater, and built Altars for all the host of Heaven, *&c.* But when the Lord brought him into affliction, he humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers, and was brought to Repentance, 2 *Chron.* 33.11,12,13. It is probable that there is mention made of his humbling himself before the God of his Fathers, to shew that his Fathers Instructions were instrumental to bring him to Repentance, when he was in his affliction.

III. Though you should not convert your Children or Servants by the instructions which you give them out of the word of God, yet possibly what you do may prepare them for the Ministry of the Word; the Seed you have sown may be quickned by the Ministry of the Word to their conversion and salvation. And this is no small mercy to be instrumental to plow up the fallow ground, and to prepare the hearts of your Children and Servants, for the publick Ministry of the Word. All that heard *John Baptist* were not brought to believe in Christ, yet was not *John* the *Baptist's* labour in vain, for *John's* Labours did prepare them for Christ; and when they came to hear Christ, the remembring what they had heard from *John*, did help them to believe

believe in Christ, as we may see *John* 10. 40, 41, 42. *And Jesus went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized, and there he abode; and many resorted to him, and said, John did no miracle, but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there.*

IV. Consider what pains the Husbandman takes in tilling the Earth, and what long patience he exerciseth before he reaps any fruit of his Labours: He ploweth often in order to the fitting and preparing the Earth to receive the Seed, and after his Seed is sowen it lieth buried under the ground, and for a season nothing appears; after his Seed cometh up, it is a long time to the Harvest; and many times by unseasonable weather, either immoderate Rain, or Drought, or Blasting, or Mildew, all his Labour is lost: Yet he renews his labour again year after year, as long as he liveth, and ploweth and soweth his ground, in hope of the blessing of God. The Apostle puts us in mind of the Husbandmans patience, to make us patient in waiting for better things, *James* 5. 7. *Be patient therefore Brethren, unto the coming of the Lord; Behold the Husbandman waiteth for the precious Fruit of the Earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter Rain.* What though you see no fruit after much pains taken with your Families? And after some appearance of fruit, there comes a blasting of your hopes, yet you must renew your Labours day after day, hoping that at length God will bless your endeavours. The fruit of instruction in the conversion and edification of your Families, is much better than the fruits of the earth, and is worthy of more pains and patience than the Husbandman exerciseth for obtaining the fruits of the earth. Remem-

Remember therefore and follow the counsel of *Solomon*, Eccles. 11.6. *In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening with-hold not thy hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.*

V. Though you should not convert the Souls of your Children and Servants, yet you must go on to instruct them, for in so doing you shall deliver your own Soul, *Ezek.* 3.19. *If thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy Soul:* And shall be clear from their blood, *Acts* 20. 26,27. *I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God.*

VI. Though you should take much pains in instructing your Families, and should be instrumental to convert none of them, yet your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord; for you shall have a great Reward from God: Your Reward shall be according to your work and pains that you have taken, not according to your success, *Rev.* 22. 12. *Behold I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be.* As it is with the Ministers of Christ, if they have taught the people diligently and faithfully the good word of the Lord, though they have not converted them, they shall have their Reward from God, and be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, *Isa.* 49.4,5. *Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain; yet surely my Judgment is with the Lord, and my Work* (or as it is in the Margin, *my Reward*) *with my God——Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord,*

Lord, and my God shall be my strength. So also it shall be with Masters of Families.

Wherefore do not give over this work through any discouragement, but be stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding therein, inasmuch as you know that your labour shall not be in vain; according to what you find recorded, 1 *Cor.* 15.58. *Therefore my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord: forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Considerations to quiet Parents whose Children died in such an estate as they can have no hope of their Salvation.

IF any shall demand further, *Suppose after all our endeavours to teach, convert, and save our Children and Servants Souls, some of them should prove vile and wicked persons, and should live and die in their sins, and so should perish eternally; What Considerations may quiet our minds and support us under such a trial as this, to see our Children, or any other Member of the Family, for whose conversion and salvation we have put up many prayers, and have taken much pains in teaching and instructing them, perish eternally.*

SECT. 1.

Answer.

1. THough our Children and Servants whom we have instructed, and for whom we have prayed, should prove very vile and wicked, yet we should hope as long as we and they live, that God in his due time may hear our Prayers, and bless our Endeavours for the conversion of their Souls, *Eccles.* 9.4.

9.4. *For to him that is joyned to all the Living, there is hope.* The Lord ſometimes gives Repentance unto Life, to the worſt of men, to ſuch as are the Devils ſlaves, and ſuch as are taken captive by him at his will, and to ſuch as do oppoſe the means of their ſalvation, 2 *Tim.*2.25,26. And as God calls ſome of the chiefeſt Sinners, ſo he calls ſome towards the latter end of their days. Some were called into the Vineyard at the eleventh hour of the day, when they had ſpent all the day in idleneſs, *Matth.*13.6,7. *About the eleventh hour he went out, and found others ſtanding idle, and ſaith unto them, Why ſtand ye here all the day idle?* ——*Go ye alſo into the Vineyard*—— If we ſhould die before them, and ſee them continuing in their ſins till our dying day, yet as *Noah*, though he foreſaw that the Gentiles who were the poſterity of *Japheth*, *Gen.*10.1,5. would continue a long time in their eſtrangement from God, yet he hoped that God in due time would convert them, and cauſe them to embrace the true Religion, which was continued in the Off-ſpring of *Shem*, Gen.9.27. *God ſhall enlarge* (or as the word may be render'd, *God ſhall perſwade*) *Japheth, and he ſhall dwell in the Tents of Shem.* So ſhould we hope concerning our Children, that God will perſwade their hearts to repent of their ſins, though we ſhould ſee them go on in evil and deſtructive courſes a long time together, and that becauſe of his promiſe to circumciſe not only our hearts, but the hearts alſo of our Seed to love him with all our hearts, and all our ſouls, that both we and they may have everlaſting life, *Deut.* 30.6.

2. If after all our prayers, and tears, and inſtructions, and endeavours after their ſalvation, we ſhould ſee any of our Children or Servants live and

die in such a condition as that we could have no hope of their salvation, we may quiet our minds with such considerations as these:

I. Consider Gods Soveraignty: He hath a soveraign power over all his Creatures, to dispose of their temporal and spiritual estate according to his own pleasure; we are in Gods hand as clay in the hands of the Potter, *Jer.*18.6. *O House of Israel, cannot I do with you as this Potter, saith the Lord? Behold as the Clay is in the Potters hand, so are ye in mine hand, O House of Israel*: And what is the power the Potter hath over the Clay? *Rom.*9.21. *Hath not the Potter power over the Clay, of the same lump to make one Vessel unto Honour, and another unto Dishonour?* Jer.18.4. *The Vessel that he made of Clay was marred in the hand of this Potter; so he made it again another Vessel, as seemed good to the Potter to make it.* If it be in the Potters power to make every Vessel as seemeth good to him, if he may make of the same lump one Vessel to honour, and another to dishonour; may not the great God do what he pleaseth with his Creatures? May not He make of Children that are born of the same Parents, and enjoy the same instructions, one a Vessel unto Honour, and another a Vessel of his Wrath and Displeasure for ever? All Creatures in Heaven, and in the Earth, and in the Sea, and in all other places, are disposed of by God, according to his will and good pleasure, *Psal.*135.6. *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in Heaven, and in Earth, and in the Seas, and in all deep places.* And shall we think much, or repine against God, when he disposeth of our Children, or any other Member of the Family, as seemeth good in his sight. When the Lord said to *Eli, I will judge his House for ever——And I have sworn unto the House of Eli, That*

the

iniquity of Eli's House shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever, 1 *Sam.* 3. 13,14. This was sad tidings, yet when *Eli* considered it was the Lord who had power to dispose of him and his Family, as seemeth good in his sight, he quietly submitted his will to the will of God, vers. 18. *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* No Parents did ever thirst more after the salvation of their Childrens Souls, than Jesus Christ thirsted after the salvation of fallen man; yet when he saw that it was his Fathers good pleasure to hide the Mysteries of the Gospel from some persons who were wise and prudent in worldly matters, with whom he had taken much pains in preaching the Gospel, he rested abundantly satisfied in the will and pleasure of his Father, *Mat.* 11. 25,26. *At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes: Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* From verse 19. to 24. Jesus Christ upbraids the Cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not, and tells them what an heavy condemnation they should have at the day of Judgment, more dreadful than *Tyre* or *Sydon*, or *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*: And at that time, when he had done upbraiding those Cities, he addresseth himself to his Father, wherein he declares his perfect acquiescence in his Fathers will, *Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight*; although he had hid the Mysteries of the Gospel from the wise and prudent, (and we know that eternal perdition followeth the hiding of the Gospel, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost*) and had revealed them only, or chiefly at least, to such as were in comparison of the wise and prudent

men in the world, but *Babes*. Now ſeeing our Lord Jeſus did acquieſce in his Fathers good pleaſure, when he ſaw many amongſt whom he had preached and done his mighty works, continuing in their unbelief and impenitent condition, and ſo periſhing eternally; It concerneth us to ſubmit our ſelves to the will and pleaſure of God, if after all the pains that we have taken to convert and ſave our Childrens Souls, he ſhould leave ſome of them to periſh in their ſins. We muſt know that he is God, and ſo may diſpoſe of us, and all that belongs to us, as he pleaſeth, and howſoever he is pleaſed to deal with us, we muſt be ſtill and ſilent under his hand, *Pſal.* 46. 10. *Be ſtill, and know that I am God.*

II. Others as good and better than we, have met with the ſame trial, *viz.* ſome of their children and ſervants have degenerated and proved vicious and lewd perſons, and have lived and died in their ſins, notwithſtanding all the pains that their Parents and Governours have taken to convert and ſave their ſouls. *Adam* had a *Cain*, (who murthered his own brother, and was a fugitive and vagabond in the earth, and hath the brand of a wicked man ſet upon him by the Holy Ghoſt, 1 *John* 3. 12.) as well as righteous *Abel*: *Noah* had an *Ham*, who ſaw and divulged his fathers nakedneſs, and had his fathers curſe upon him and his poſterity, as well as a pious *Shem* and *Japheth*: righteous *Lot* had two daughters that enticed him to drunkenneſs and inceſt: *Iſhmael* in his younger time was ſo vile, that *Abraham* caſt him out of his family for a ſcoffer; *Iſaac* had a profane *Eſau* who ſold his Birthright for a meſs of Pottage, a man hated of God; *Eſau have I hated*, Rom. 9. 13. as well as a godly *Jacob*. *Jacob* met with croſſes in his Children, *Reuben* his firſt-born

defiled

defiled his Fathers Bed, *Simeon* and *Levi* by their cruelty in slaying the *Shechemites* after they had drawn them to be circumcised, made *Jacob*'s name to stink among the Inhabitants of the Land, *Gen.* 34.30. *Judah* lieth with his Daughter-in-law *Tamar*, supposing her to have been an Harlot, with divers other crosses in the rest of his Children, as the selling of *Joseph* into *Egypt*, &c. *Aaron* lost two sons, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, In the very act of sin, as they were offering up strange fire, fire came from the Lord, and consumed them. *Eli*'s children were such sons of *Belial*, that their wickedness caused men to abhor the offerings of the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 2.12,17. *David* met with much affliction in his children; *Amnon* ravished his sister *Tamar*, *Absolom* killed *Amnon* when his heart was merry with wine, *Absolom* was cut off in the Act of his Rebellion, *Adonijah* seeks the Crown which his father had devolved upon his son *Solomon*. Our Lord Jesus Christ himself had a select Family, consisting of twelve Apostles, whom he chose out of all *Israel*, and whom he often instructed with great power, (*for his word was with power*, Luke 4.32.) and yet one of them proved little better than a devil, *John* 6.70. *Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?* He proved so vile, that he betrayed his Master for thirty pieces of silver, and then went and hang'd himself, and went to his own place. *Elisha* the Prophet had a lying servant, *Gehazi*, who went in his Masters name, but contrary to his Masters mind, to *Naaman* the *Syrian*, and demanded and received for his own use a great sum of money, as much as two men could carry, and two changes of Garments, 2 *Kings* 5.20, 21, 22, 23. These examples, with several others which might be produced, do shew that though it be a great affliction to have evil

children and evil servants, yet it is a temptation common to men, even to good men, yea such as have befallen the best men that ever lived upon the face of the earth, whose persons have been very dear and precious in the sight of God, and their works and labours have been graciously accepted of him. And therefore we should not be disquieted or cast down without measure, because God doth not bless our labours with the converting and saving of all the members of our families, neither should we conclude from hence that either our persons or our labours are not accepted with God.

III. Our children are *Gods creatures* as well as *our children:* God hath a greater right to them, and a greater interest in them, than we have. We were but Gods instruments to bring them into the world: It was (not we, but) God created and gave them their beings, it was Gods hands that framed and fashioned their Bodies when they lay in their Mothers womb, *Psal.* 119. 97. *Thy hands have made and fashioned me:* 1 Cor. 12. 24. *God hath tempered the body together:* It is God that gave them every part of their Bodies, as Skin, and Bones, and Flesh, and Sinews; *Job* 10. 11. *Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews:* And every member of their Bodies, as Eyes, Hands, Feet, *&c. Psal.* 139. 16. *Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect, and in thy Book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, whenas yet there was none of them.* It was God which created their Souls, after he had formed their Bodies, *Zech.* 12. 1.—*Saith the Lord, which stretcheth forth the Heavens, and layeth the foundation of the Earth, and formeth the Spirit of Man within him:* Ezek. 18. 4. *Behold all Souls are mine; as the Soul of the Father, so also the Soul of the*

Son

Son is mine; the Soul that ſinneth ſhall die: It was God that drew them out of the womb, *Pſal.* 22.9. *Thou art he that took me out of the womb*: It is God that hath preſerved them alive ever ſince they were born, *Pſal.* 66.8, 9. *O bleſs our God, ye people,—who holdeth our Soul in life.* And ſeeing God hath a far greater right to our Children than we have, ſhall we be diſcontented when he diſpoſeth of them as he ſeeth good? May not he ſay ſo to us, when we repine at any thing that he doth to our children, as the good Houſholder ſaid to thoſe that murmured at him, *Matth.* 20.13,15. *Friend I do thee no wrong,—Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* And as our children are the works of his hands, ſo his mercies towards his works, are beyond our mercies towards thoſe that proceed from our bowels, *Pſal.* 145. 9. *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*: He deſires their welfare both here and for ever, more than we can do, *Job* 14.15. *—Thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thine hands*: Deut. 5. 29. *O that there were ſuch an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their Children for ever!* Now if the Lord, whoſe tender mercies are over all his works, and who deſireth our Childrens welfare more than we our ſelves do, ſaw cauſe to caſt away the works of his own hands into eternal torments, ſhall we by our diſcontent go about to controul God in what he hath done, as though we were wiſer or more merciful than He?

IV. Though there be a great depth in Gods Judgments, and ſuch as we can't ſearch out the reaſon of them, why ſometimes he converteth one, and leaveth another to periſh in his ſins, although both are born of the ſame Parents, and live under the ſame means

of grace; Yet he is always Just and Righteous, and True, and Faithful, in all his ways. The Apostle was a man of a deeper insight into the mysteries of the Gospel than we are, yet he confesseth some of Gods ways to be unsearchable, *Rom.* 11.34. *O the depth of the Riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!* Whatever Judgments God inflicts upon Nations, or particular Persons, though we may not be able to fathom the reason of them, yet we must believe that all that the Righteous God doth, is Just and True, and that he never acts contrary to the Truth of his Word, or against the Rules of Justice, *Rev.*15.3. *They sing the Song of Moses the Servant of God, and the Song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, Just and True are thy Ways, thou King of Saints.* This Song was sung upon the pouring out of the seven last Plagues, in which was filled up the Wrath of God, verse 1. From hence it is evident that the Lord doth nothing beyond the Rules of Justice, or contrary to his Truth, when he poureth out his wrath to the utmost either upon a Nation, or upon particular persons. When the children of godly Parents sin against God, and God casteth them away for their sins, he doth not by this act pervert Justice and Equity; *Job* 8.3,4. *Doth God pervert Judgment? Or doth the Almighty pervert Justice; If thy Children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression?* Now when God doth those things which are Just and Right, we should be so far from murmuring, that we should praise and honour God, although we our selves should suffer deeply by those Judgments. After *Nebuchadnezzar* was driven from his Throne, and forced to dwell among the Beasts of

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the field, where he was wet with the dew of Heaven, and did eat graſs with the Oxen, when his underſtanding returned to him again, although he was about ſeven years under this great and unuſual Judgment, becauſe he ſaw Juſtice and Truth in this ſtroke of God, he extolled and praiſed the Lord, *Dan* 4 37. *Now I Nebuchadnezzar praiſe and extol and honour the King of Heaven, all whoſe Works are Truth, and his Ways are Judgment; and thoſe that walk in pride, he is able to abaſe.*

V. God ſhall have eternal Glory from them that periſh, as well as from them that are ſaved: His Juſtice ſhall be glorified on them that periſh, and his Mercy in them that are ſaved. When ungodly ſinners are caſt into Hell in great multitudes, God is glorified in their deſtruction, *Iſa.* 5. 14, 16. *Therefore Hell hath enlarged her ſelf, and opened her mouth without meaſure, and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoyceth, ſhall deſcend into it —— But the Lord of Hoſts ſhall be exalted in Judgment, and God that is holy ſhall be ſanctified in Righteouſneſs.* Now ſeeing God ſhall be glorified in them that periſh, this may quiet our minds, and keep down all murmuring thoughts, if it ſhould be our portion to have any of our children cut off in their ſins. *Aaron's* two ſons, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, were cut off in the act of ſin, while they were offering ſtrange fire, there went out fire from the Lord and conſumed them, and they died before the Lord; yet when *Aaron* heard *Moſes* ſpeak of Gods being glorified, he was ſilent under this heavy ſtroke, *Lev.* 10. 3. *Then Moſes ſaid unto Aaron, This is that the Lord ſpake, ſaying, I will be ſanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the People I will be glorified: And Aaron held his peace.* God made all things and all perſons, wicked as well as

good

good men, for his own glory: *Prov.* 16.4. *The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea even the wicked for the day of evil,* Rev. 4.11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* And seeing God made all things and persons for his own pleasure and glory, he may glorifie himself according to his own will and pleasure, upon every one of his creatures, and none may say unto him, What doest thou?

VI. The consideration of the great and wonderful mercy of God in bestowing his grace upon our souls, and taking us into his everlasting Covenant, may quiet our minds, however it shall please him to deal with our Families. *David* met with great afflictions in his Family, some of his children proved perverse and were very great crosses to him, and died in such a state as he could have little or no hope of their salvation; *Amnon* was such a vitious person that he ravished his own sister *Tamar*, and was slain when his heart was merry with wine, 2 *Sam.* 13.28. by this phrase is signified that *Amnon* was little better than drunk when he was slain, as may be gathered from 1 *Sam.* 25.36. where *Nabals* drunkenness is expressed by his heart being merry; *Nabals heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken.* *Absolom* who had caused his Brother *Amnon* to be slain, rose up in rebellion against his Father, and sought to take his Kingdom and Life from him, and was cut off in this act of sin? And how did *David* quiet himself under these great afflictions that befel his House? It was with the Covenant that God had made with his own Soul, 2 *Sam.* 23.5. *Although my House be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my salva-*

vation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow. The mercies and blessings of the Covenant are so great, and such unvaluable mercies, that when we consider the riches of Gods grace, and his infinite love in taking our own souls into Covenant with himself; this consideration may so fill our hearts with joy, as to swallow up all our sorrows, arising either from personal or family-afflictions. Wine will chear such as are of a sorrowful spirit, and make them forget their miseries, *Prov.* 31. 6, 7. *Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine to them that be of heavy hearts: Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.* Gods love is better, and hath more efficacy to chear such as are of heavy hearts, than wine; *Cant.* 1. 2. —*Thy love is better than Wine*: And if Wine will refresh such as are of sorrowful spirits, yea such as are ready to perish under their affliction, what efficacy is there in the love of God, which he hath manifested in taking our souls into Covenant, to comfort us under our greatest sorrows and miseries, even such as lie heavy upon our hearts, yea such as we think we shall perish under them?

Sect. 2.

The Case of such as are overwhelmed with grief, because they fear their Children are in Eternal Torments, considered. Gods Justice in punishing Sinners to Eternity, vindicated.

TO these Considerations I shall add a Reply to such Pleas as those Parents whose Children have died in their sins may possibly make use of to excuse their immoderate grief and discontent, and perplexity of mind, under this affliction of losing their Chil-

Children in such a state, as that they can have no hope of their salvation: And so I shall conclude this Treatise.

1 Plea. *My Children that are dead in their sins, are gone into everlasting burnings, where their torments will be endless and intolerable; and it so pierceth my heart and distracteth my mind, when I think that those that came out of my Bowels, my Children, for whom I had such a dear affection, should be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, where they must remain for eternity; that I am not able to bear it, but sometimes I am ready to fret against God; and at other times my heart is so full with grief, that I think it will break in pieces, and I shall die with sorrow.*

Answ. 1. If your Children be cast into eternal Torments for their sins, it is God hath done it; He keeps the Keys of Death and Hell: No person is cut off by death, none after death are cast into Hell, but at Gods appointment, *Rev.*1.18. *I have the Keys of Hell and Death*: There is not so much as one Sparrow falleth to the ground, but at the will and by the appointment of God: *Matth.* 10. 29. *Are not two Sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father.* If a Sparrow doth not fall to the ground without the will of God, then surely an immortal Soul doth not fall into Hell Torments, but at his appointment: for the meanest Soul that ever was created, is of a thousand times more value than many Sparrows. And seeing it is God hath done it, how grievous and bitter soever it be unto your Souls, you must bear it with patience: *Psal.*39.9,10. *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou diddest it*: And this was no small stroke under which *David* was dumb, because the Lord gave him the blow; but it was so great, as that he

he was even consumed with it, as the next words shew, *Remove thy stroke away from me, I am consumed by the blow of thine hand:* By his being consumed, we may understand the greatness of his grief, as *Psal.* 31.9. *Mine eye is consumed with grief, yea my soul and my belly*; yet under this great stroke which consumed his Soul and his Body with grief, he was dumb and opened not his mouth because God did it. Whatsoever cometh from the hands of God, must be born with silence and submission to his will, although it be so sharp and bitter, as that it will make us go mourning as long as we live, *Isa.*38.15. *What shall I say? He hath spoken unto me, and himself hath done it, I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my Soul.* And as we must be patient under all our griefs, so we must contentedly bear whatever grievous things befal our children, *Jer.* 10. 19, 20. *Woe is me for my hurt, my wound is grievous; but I said, Truly this is a grief, and I must bear it——My Children are gone forth of me, and are not.*——

II. God is righteous in what he hath done to your Children, although he hath cast them into eternal torments. If you think it not consistent with Righteousness and Equity, to punish the sins of a few years with endless and eternal torments, consider

1. That the Scriptures assure us that the Lord is righteous in all his ways, *Psal.*145.18. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works:* And if the Lord be righteous in all his ways, then also in this way of his Providence, when he condemneth wicked men to eternal torments for the sins they committed in that short space of time they lived in the world. Yea, more particularly, we find the Scriptures ascribing Righteousness to God in this very case, when he punisheth ungodly persons with ever-

everlasting torments, 2 *Thes.*1.6,9. *It is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you,—who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

2. The Angels are more glorious Creatures than the Souls of Men, yet when they sinned against God, the Lord did not spare them, but for their first sin cast them down into hell, 2 *Pet.*1.4. *God spared not the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into Chains of Darkness, to be reserved unto Judgment:* And that they shall be punished in Hell with everlasting torments, is evident from *Matth.* 25.41. *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* And this he did without affording them any means of their recovery from their sin and misery, which was granted to fallen man, *Heb.*2.16. *For verily he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but he took on him the Seed of Abraham.* Now seeing God cast those glorious Creatures the Angels, into eternal torments for their first transgression, and did not spare them one day, or afford them any means of recovery after their fall, shall we think that God deals hardly with the Sons of men, in condemning them to eternal torments, whenas he afforded them means of grace and salvation, and gave them a long time and space for their Repentance, waiting day after day, and year after year, for their returning to him? Is not this far greater mercy, and less severity, then was shewn to the fallen Angels?

3. Sin is committed against an eternal God, against an infinitely holy, great, and glorious GOD, and therefore deserveth an infinite and eternal punishment. We do not understand, or at least we do not consi-

consider, what an odious thing Sin is, and what a great God the Lord is; and what an infinite distance there is between the great and holy God, and a poor sinful man, when we think that the Lord deals hardly with sinners in punishing their sins with eternal torments. What an hainous crime is it for man, who is but a poor worm made of dust and ashes, to affront, despise, and rebel against the great GOD of Heaven and Earth, who gave him his Being, and loadeth him with his Benefits every day? To tread the Laws of God under his feet, and to cast his word behind his back, to slight all his Promises and Threatnings, to contemn all his offers of Grace and Mercy, and though he wait with much patience and long-suffering many days and years for his Repentance, to refuse to return and obey the Voice of his Creator? Doth not such a despising of the Eternal, Immortal, Ever-Blessed God, deserve to be punished with eternal Torments?

4. It is accounted no injustice among men to inflict a punishment of long continuance for a crime that was committed in a very short time. If Murder, Adultery, Treason, or some other capital Offence, which was committed in the space of a few minutes, be punished with perpetual imprisonment, or perpetual banishment, no man counts it injustice, or thinks the Offender is hardly dealt with, because he is so long punish'd for an offence committed in so short a time: Why then should any man think that the Righteous God dealeth hardly or unjustly in punishing sinners with perpetual torments, for the sins they committed those few years they lived in the world?

5. It was their own choice to embrace eternal death. God set before them Life and Death, He told them if they did evil, they should die eternally;

nally; but if they would repent, and do that which is good in his sight, they should have everlasting life; and he called upon them earnestly, to chuse Life, rather than Death: *Deut.*30.15,19. *See, I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil*——*Therefore chuse life*—He offered them Life in his Son, and they would not go unto him for it, *John* 5.40. *And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life.* He protested solemnly to them, that he was loth they should die, and therefore pleaded with them, *Why will ye die?* Ezek.33.11. *Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live: Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O House of Israel?* And therefore they must blame themselves, not the Lord, for their being cast into eternal Torments.

6. Had they been permitted to have lived for ever upon the face of the Earth, they would have sinned for ever: *The heart of the Sons of men is fully set in them to do evil,* Eccles.8.11. They would always have gone on resisting the Spirit of God, and doing those things which are grievous in the sight of God, *Psal.*10,4,5. *The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not seek after God, God is not in all his thoughts; his ways are always grievous*: Acts 7.51. *Ye do always resist the holy Ghost:* They would continually have sinned against God in their hearts and lives, *Gen.*6.5. *God saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the Earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* Time would have been so far from leading them to Repentance, that the longer they had lived, they would have been the more subtil and obstinate sinners, and would have been longer accustomed to do evil; and

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the longer a man hath been accuſtomed to do evil, the harder it is to bring him to Repentance, *Jer.* 13. 23. Is there any inequality in puniſhing them for ever, who would have ſinned for ever? Now if God hath dealt righteouſly with your Children, why ſhould you fret or be diſquieted at the righteous dealings of the Juſt and Righteous God? Was it meet that the Lord ſhould have perverted Juſtice for your ſake, or the ſake of your Children?

III. The Lord hath fulfilled his eternal counſel, and declared his truth and faithfulneſs in fulfilling his Threatnings denounced againſt impenitent ſinners by condemning your children, who died in their ſins, unto eternal torments: God hath plainly revealed it in his holy Word, that it is his eternal and unchangable purpoſe to caſt into eternal torments all wicked and ungodly perſons, that live and die in their ſins without Repentance. The Scriptures are full of Threatnings to this effect; as, *Pſal.* 9. 17. *Luk.* 13. 3, 5. *Mat.* 13. 41, 42. *Mat.* 25. 41. *Rev.* 21. 8. with a multitude of other places; why then ſhould you fret at Gods fulfilling his eternal counſel, and at his faithfulneſs in fulfilling his word? As *Bildad* ſaid to *Job* 18. 4. *He teareth himſelf in his anger, ſhall the Earth be forſaken for thee? And ſhall the Rock be removed out of his place?* The like may I ſay to you, Why do you tear your ſelves in your anger? Should the Lord have forſaken his eternal counſels, which are more firm than the Earth or Rocks, and would have brought greater confuſion than the removing the Earth, or the Rocks out of their places, for your ſakes? Would you have had him altered the way and courſe of mans ſalvation for the ſake of your Children? Would you have had him proved unfaithful in not fulfilling his word, to ſpare your Children

from eternal torments? This in effect is to have desired that he would have denied his own Being, and ceased to be God, rather than to have condemned your Children. For if God should depart from his faithfulness, he should deny his own Being, 2 *Tim.*2. 12. *He abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself.*

IV. Murmuring and fretting against God for condemning your Children, who died in their sins, unto eternal torments, is the way to fall into the same condemnation with your Children. For those that resemble Dogs by their barking and snarling, and being angry at what God doth, shall be shut out of heaven, *Rev.* 22. 15. *Without are Dogs.* The Apostle cautions us against murmuring, lest we should thereby provoke God to destroy us, 1 *Cor.*10.10. *Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the Destroyer.* And therefore instead of murmuring against God for destroying your Children, admire his great and wonderful mercy, that you as well as they are not consumed, and cast into everlasting burnings, *Lam.*3.22. *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.*

V. Your excessive sorrow for your deceased children, who died in their sins, doth not please God, nor any way benefit you or your children. It doth not please God, he is troubled that you do not joy more in having him for your God, and Portion, and Saviour, than you grieve at the loss of your children, but that your grief for your children should swallow up your joy in God; and may say to you as *Elkanah* did to *Hannah*, 1 Sam. 1.8. *Why weepest thou? And why eatest thou not? And why is thy heart grieved? Am not I better to thee than ten sons?* When any affection exceedeth its due bounds, it is sinful; and that which

which is ſinful diſpleaſeth God. Your exceſſive ſorrow will no ways benefit your deceaſed children. If you could ſhed Rivers of Tears for them, they would avail nothing for their Releaſe, or the mitigation of their torments: Prayers and Tears may do great things for the Living, but they are not any way profitable for the Dead. And as Prayers and Tears profit dead men nothing, ſo neither can any other work that is done by any man under the Sun, be any way beneficial to the Dead. *Solomon*, ſpeaking of the dead, ſaith, *Eccl.* 9. 6. *Neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the Sun.* When once God hath paſſed ſentence upon them for their eternal ſtate, no Creature can prevail with him to change his mind, *Job* 23. 13. *But he is in one mind, and who can turn him?* Not one Soul that is caſt into hell can by any means be redeemed from thence again, *Pſal.* 49. 8. *For the redemption of their ſoul is precious, and it ceaſeth for ever.* And as your inordinate ſorrow doth not benefit your deceaſed children, ſo neither do you your ſelves reap any advantage by it; it is ſo far from doing you good, that it hurts you both in body, and ſoul, and eſtate: It hurts your bodies as it dries and conſumes them, and haſtens your death, *Prov.* 17. 22. *A broken ſpirit drieth the bones.* 2 Cor. 7. 10. *The ſorrow of the world worketh death.* It hurts your Souls, as it hinders your communion with God, and your performing that ſervice you owe to God, and tends to the deſtroying of the Kingdom of God in your Souls, which conſiſteth not only in righteouſneſs, but alſo in peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt, *Rom.* 14. 17. It hurts your Eſtates, as it unfits you for the works of your Calling. And therefore ſeeing that your exceſſive grief doth not pleaſe God,

nor benefit your Children or your selves, nor any other person, but you disquiet your selves in vain, let this put a period to your immoderate sorrows.

VI. Turn your excessive sorrowing for the loss of your deceased Childrens souls into zealous endeavours after the salvation of your own soul, and the souls of your surviving Children. Instead of unprofitable mourning for the dead, rise up and work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling, and save, if it be possible, all that are committed to your charge. As the Lord called off *Samuel* from mourning for *Saul*, to anoint an other King, 1 *Sam.* 16. 1. *And the Lord said unto Samuel, how long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine horn with oyl, and go*, &c. So he calls you off from mourning for your children, whom he hath rejected, to make sure of your own and your surviving Relations Salvations.

VII. Turn your indignation which is apt to arise in your hearts against God because he hath cast away your Childrens Souls, into indignation against sin, which was the cause why God cast away their Souls. Hate all sin in your selves, and hate all sin in others, with a perfect hatred, and never be reconciled to it as long as you live, for the mischief that it hath done to you and your Children. Seek by way of holy revenge the utter destruction of all sin. Root it out of your hearts, and of your Families, and do what you can to hinder it from growing any more.

Sect.

Sect. 3.

The Plea of ſuch as are troubled, becauſe they conveyed Original ſin to their Children, anſwered.

Plea 2. *MY Children that died in their ſins, and are now gone down into everlaſting burning, received their corrupt natures from me; I was inſtrumental to convey unto them their Original Sin, and their Original Sin cauſed their Actual Sins, which cauſed their Damnation, and this troubles me ſo exceedingly, that I know not what to do, I am ready to curſe the day in which I entred into a married condition; I might have kept my ſelf ſingle, and then my wicked Children had never been born; and ſometimes I am ready to curſe my Parents who conveyed a ſinful nature unto me.*

Anſw. 1. It is true that Parents do convey ſinful natures to their Children, *Pſal.* 51. 5. *Behold I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me.*

2. Though it be thus, Children muſt not blame their Parents for the blemiſhes they receive from their birth, *Iſa.* 45. 10. *Woe unto him that ſaith unto his Father, what begetteſt thou, or to the woman, what haſt thou brought forth?* Deut. 27. 16. *Curſed be he that ſetteth light by his Father or Mother, and all the People ſhall ſay Amen.* Neither ſhould we blame our ſelves for entring into a married ſtate of life, For *Marriage is honourable in all*, Heb. 13. 4. The Lord Jeſus honoured it with his Preſence, and working one of his firſt Miracles at a Marriage Feaſt, *Joh.* 2. 1, 2, 11. Though Parents convey ſinful natures to their Children, yet Marriage is no ſin, 1 *Cor.* 7. 28. *But and if thou marry thou haſt not ſinned, and if a Virgin marry ſhe hath not ſinned.*

3. Your being inſtrumental to convey corrupt natures to your Children ſhould make you look more throughly into the odious nature of Original Sin, and to loath your ſelves, and to be deeply humbled for it, but it ſhould not make you to repine that you were inſtruments of bringing Children into the World, for Children are counted bleſſings of God, and the man is called happy that is full of them, *Pſal.*127. 3. 6. *So Children are an Heritage of the Lord. And the fruit of the womb is his reward —— Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them——*

4. The Lord did provide a remedy againſt your Childrens ſinful natures which they derived from you. He hath ſent forth his Son to ſave us from our ſins, and to make us partakerr of the Divine Nature; His bloud is compared to a fountain, which cleanſeth from all ſorts of ſins; it procureth the pardon of Original as well as Actual Sin. *Zech.*13.1. *In that day there ſhall be a fountain opened for the houſe of David, and to the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem for ſin, and for uncleanneſs.*1 Joh.1.7.*The bloud of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin.* He was ſent by God, not only to pardon our ſins, but to give us grace to turn from our ſins, *Acts* 3.26. *Unto you firſt God having raiſed up his Son Jeſus, ſent him to bleſs you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.* And God made a free offer of his Son Jeſus Chriſt with all his ſaving benefits to your Childrer, *Rev.* 22.17. It was their refuſal of the remedy provided in and by Chriſt, which was the cauſe of their condemnation, *John* 3.19. Their neglect of the great Salvation of the Goſpel brought upon them eternal deſtruction, *Heb.*2.3. *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation?*

5. As God provided a Saviour for them ſo you

(if

(if you did not neglect your duty) were careful to train them up in the knowledge of this Saviour, and to acquaint them with all the counſel of God, what he would have them believe, and what he would have them do, in order to their ſalvation, and did exhort them to wait upon God in all his Ordinances, & when you ſaw them do any evil, you reproved them, and warned them of the danger of their evil ways. If thus you have diſcharged your duty towards them, in warning them to turn from their evil ways, and declaring to them the will and counſel of God concerning their ſalvation, which may be reduced to theſe two heads: That they ſhould repent and turn from their ſins unto God, and believe in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, you are clear from their bloud although they died in their ſins. *Ezek.* 3. 19. *If thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedneſs, nor from his wicked way, he ſhall die in his iniquity, but thou haſt delivered thy ſoul.* Acts 20.20,21,26,27. *I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you—— Teſtifying both to the Jews, and alſo to the Greeks repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt —— Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the bloud of all men, for I have not ſhunned to declare unto you all the counſel of God.*

Sect. 4.

The caſe of thoſe who are troubled becauſe their Childrens bloud will be required at their hands, conſidered.

Plea 3. *My Childrens Souls are loſt through my negligence and careleſneſs; if I had diſcharged my duty towards them, it would have been ſome relief to me, but I have been wanting in my duty towards them; And now what can I expect but that God ſhould*

require their bloud at my hands, and this is ſuch a trouble to me, that my Children through my negligence ſhould be caſt into everlaſting burnings, and that their bloud ſhould be required at my hands, that I know not what to do; I cannot reſt either night or day, by reaſon of my ſin in deſtroying my Childrens ſouls, and the miſery which hereby I have brought upon mine own ſoul?

Anſw. 1. This is a great ſin, and ought to be much lamented, that you ſhould be guilty of the loſs of your Childrens ſouls. And it is a wonderful thing that many Parents make ſo light of it, it is an argument that they are under a ſpirit of ſlumber and judicial hardneſs of heart. How great an evil it is for Parents to be guilty of the bloud of their childrens ſouls, and how they ought to be affected with it I have ſhewn before, *Chap.* 2. *Sect.* 2. But though this be a great ſin, a ſin to be lamented as long as you live, yet you muſt take heed of being ſwallowed up with over-much ſorrow. Satan labours what he can to keep us under blindneſs and hardneſs of heart, and to hinder us for mourning for our ſins, but when he cannot do that, becauſe God hath opened our eyes, and affected our hearts with the ſight of our ſin and miſery, he will endeavour to make us mourn without meaſure, eſpecially if we have been great ſinners. The inceſtuous *Corinthian* committed a great ſin, ſuch as was not ſo much as named among the Gentiles, 1 *Cor.* 5. 1. And till he was brought to repentance the Apoſtle adviſeth the Church of *Corinth* to deal ſharply with him, *ver.* 4, 5. but when he was humbled, the Apoſtle adviſeth the Church to comfort him, and why? *Leaſt perhaps ſuch a one ſhould be ſwallowed up with over-much ſorrow*, 2 Cor. 12. 7.

2. Though this be a mighty great and crying ſin for Parents by their evil example, or their neglect

to

to teach them, or by any other means to be guilty of the bloud of their Childrens ſouls, yet it is not an unpardonable ſin, but I may ſay of it as *Shecaniah* did to *Ezra* in another caſe, *Ezra* 10.2. *We have treſpaſſed againſt our God—— Yet now there is hope in Iſrael concerning this thing.* By Faith and Repentance you may obtain forgiveneſs of this as well as of other ſins. The bloud of Chriſt being applied by Faith, cleanſeth us from all manner of ſin, 1 *John* 1.7. *The bloud of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin*; If Chriſts bloud cleanſeth from all ſin, then from being guilty of the bloud of ſouls, as well as from other ſins. The merits of Chriſts bloud are ſufficient to waſh away the ſins of the greateſt ſinners in the whole world, *John* 1.29. *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the ſin of the world.* And all that believe in him ſhall for his ſake receive the remiſſion of their ſins, of what nature ſoever they have been, *Acts* 13.38,39. *Be it known unto you men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveneſs of ſins; And by him all that believe are juſtified from all things, from which we could not be juſtified by the Law of Moſes.* Acts 10.43. *To him give all the Prophets witneſs, that through his name whoſoever believeth in him ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins.* Such whoſe ſins are of the deepeſt die, who have committed ſcarlet and crimſon ſins, whoſe hands have been full of bloud, have the full and free remiſſion of all their ſins promiſed upon their repentance, *Iſa.* 1.15,16,17,18. *Your hands are full of bloud, waſh ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well—— Come now and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord, though your ſins be as ſcarlet they ſhall be as white as ſnow, though they be red like crimſon they ſhall be as wool.*

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The Lord taxeth the Jews with the bloud of the Souls of poor Innocents, and telleth them their guilt herein was as evident as what appeareth upon a mans skirts, *Jer.*2.34. *Alſo upon thy skirts is found the bloud of the ſouls of poor innocents*—— Yet to theſe Jews that were guilty of the bloud of ſouls of poor Innocents the Lord promiſeth mercy upon their repentance, *Jer.*3.12,13. *Return thou back-ſliding Iſrael, ſaith the Lord, and I will not cauſe mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, ſaith the Lord, and I will not keep mine anger for ever, only acknowledge thine iniquity that thou haſt tranſgreſſed againſt the Lord thy God.* Who were greater ſinners than they that ſhed the bloud of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt? Yet even to them that were guilty of the bloud of Chriſt, the Lord promiſeth remiſſion of that, and all their other ſins upon their repentance. *Acts* 3.14, 15, 19. *Ye denied the Holy One, and the Juſt, and deſired a Murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of life* —— *Repent ye therefore, and be ye converted, that your ſins may be blotted out, when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord.* The like we have alſo promiſed, *Acts* 2.23, 38,39. where the Apoſtle tells them who had taken and with wicked hands had crucified and ſlain the Lord Jeſus, that they were not excluded from the promiſes of mercy, but that upon their repentance they ſhould receive remiſſion of their ſins.

3. Teſtifie the truth of your repentance for ſuffering your deceaſed Children to periſh through your negligence, by doubling your diligence in doing what in you lieth to ſave the ſouls of your ſurviving Children, and Servants, and all others under your charge, by praying to God for them night and day, and inſtructing them in the knowledge of thoſe

things that make for their peace, and ſhewing of them a good example, and the uſe of all other means. This will be a means to moderate your exceſſive ſorrow, and to reſtore peace and comfort to your ſouls. For all Gods ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and his paths are paths of peace, *Prov.* 3.17. whilſt we are in the way of our duty God is wont to come in with comfort.

SECT. 5.

The Plea of ſuch as are caſt down, becauſe God hath not anſwered their Prayers, or proſpered their labours, anſwered.

Plea 4. *IT may be ſome will ſay, The ground of my trouble for my deceaſed Children ariſeth from hence, becauſe I prayed often and earneſtly for their converſion, and took much pains in teaching them, and yet the Lord hath caſt them away; and becauſe he hath not anſwered my prayers, nor bleſſed my labours, I am afraid I am none of his Elect, becauſe it is ſaid,* Iſa.65. 22,23. *Mine Elect ſhall long enjoy the work of their hands; They ſhall not labour in vain.*

Anſw. I. This is not ſo to be underſtood as though Gods Elect did convert every ſoul whom they laboured by their inſtructions to bring home to the Lord. Jeſus Chriſt is ſtiled Gods Elect, *Iſa.* 42. 1. *Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect in whom my ſoul delighteth.* Yet we find the ſame Prophet bringing in the Lord Jeſus ſpeaking thus, *Iſa.* 49.4. *I have laboured in vain, I have ſpent my ſtrength for nought.* And when he was here upon earth, many that ſaw his Miracles, and heard his Sermons remained in their unbelief and unconverted condition, *Luke* 16.14. *John* 12.37.

II. You

II. You have not laboured in vain, although your Children were not converted, for,

1. Though you did not convert your Children, yet you have delivered your own ſoul, *Ezek.* 3. 19. *If thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedneſs, nor from his wicked way, he ſhall die in his iniquity, but thou haſt delivered thy ſoul.* And the delivering of your own ſoul is worth all your pains, although you had taken a thouſand times more than you have done.

2. Your labour is not in vain in reſpect of God, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. *You know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord* Although you did not convert your Children, yet your work ſhall have a glorious reward from God, *Iſa.* 49. 4, 5. He ſmelleth a ſweet ſavour in your labours, and accepteth graciouſly both your perſon and your work, although your Children periſhed under thoſe inſtructions which you gave them out of the Word of God, 2 *Cor.* 2. 15.

III. Your Prayers are not loſt although they did not prevail for the converſion and ſalvation of your Childrens ſouls, for they ſhall be returned into your own boſom. When God doth not anſwer thoſe Prayers we make for others by giving them the bleſſings we beg on their account, he anſwers them by returning ſome bleſſing upon our own ſouls, *Pſal.* 35. 13. *But as for me when they were ſick, my cloathing was Sack-cloath, I humbled my ſoul with faſting, and my Prayer returned into my own boſom?*

Sect. 6.

How God is faithful to his Promiſe, I will be thy God, and the God of thy Seed, and yet condemneth the wicked Children of godly Parents?

Plea 5. *I Am much troubled to reconcile Gods providence in caſting away my ſeed, with his promiſe, where he hath ſaid,* I will be thy God, and the God of thy Seed. *Sometimes I am ready to queſtion Gods faithfulneſs, ſometimes I am ready to think that I my ſelf am not in Covenant with God.*

Anſw. I. In all ſuch caſes where you are not able to reconcile Gods Providences with his Promiſes, you muſt ſtedfaſtly believe that God is faithful and righteous, although you cannot apprehend how ſuch or ſuch a Providence ſhould be conſiſtent with his faithfulneſs, or with his righteouſneſs. Thus *Jeremiah* did firmly believe that God was righteous, although he ſtumbled much at the proſperity of wicked men, *Jer.* 12. 1. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee, yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments, Wherefore doth the way of the wicked proſper? Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherouſly?* The Pſalmiſt met with ſome Providences that ſeemed croſs to Gods faithfulneſs, *Pſal* 77. 8. *Doth his Promiſe fail for evermore?* Pſal. 89. 39, 49. *Thou haſt made void the Covenant of thy Servant —— Lord, where are thy former loving kindneſſes which thou ſweareſt unto David in thy truth?* Yet he did believe every word of God to be true, *Pſal.* 119. 138, 160. *Thy Teſtimones that thou haſt commanded are righteous and very faithful —— Thy Word is true from the beginning, and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.* And there is good reaſon we ſhould do

do thus, becauſe we poor finite Creatures are not able to comprehend the works of the infinite and incomprehenſible God. Divers of his Works, as well as his Eſſence, are incomprehenſible, *Job* 37.5. *God thundreth marvelouſly with his voice, great things doth he which we cannot comprehend.*

II. It is good for you to view once and again the grounds upon which you conclude God hath taken your ſouls into his Covenant, becauſe it is a buſineſs of great moment, wherein you cannot make too ſure work, and the heart of man is full of deceit; yet withal know this, that it is not a ſufficient cauſe for you to conclude, That God is not your God, and hath not taken you into this Covenant, becauſe you have had Children that died in their ſins, for *Iſaac* was in Covenant with God, *Lev.* 26. 42. *Then will I remember my Covenant with Jacob, and alſo my Covenant with Iſaac:* And yet *Eſau, Iſaacs* Son, lived and died a prophane man, *Heb.*12.16,17. *Leſt there be any Fornicator, or prophane perſon, as Eſau, who for one morſel of meat ſold his birth-right, for ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the bleſſing, he was rejected, and found no place for repentance, though he ſought it carefully with tears.*

III. God fulfils his Promiſe in being the God of your Seed, if he take any of your Seed into Covenant with himſelf, although he ſhould not beſtow his grace upon all of them.

IV. If we ſhould interpret that Promiſe made to *Abraham, I will be thy God, and the God of thy Seed,* by *Gal.* 3. 16, 29. And underſtand by the Seed of *Abraham,* to which God promiſeth to be a God,

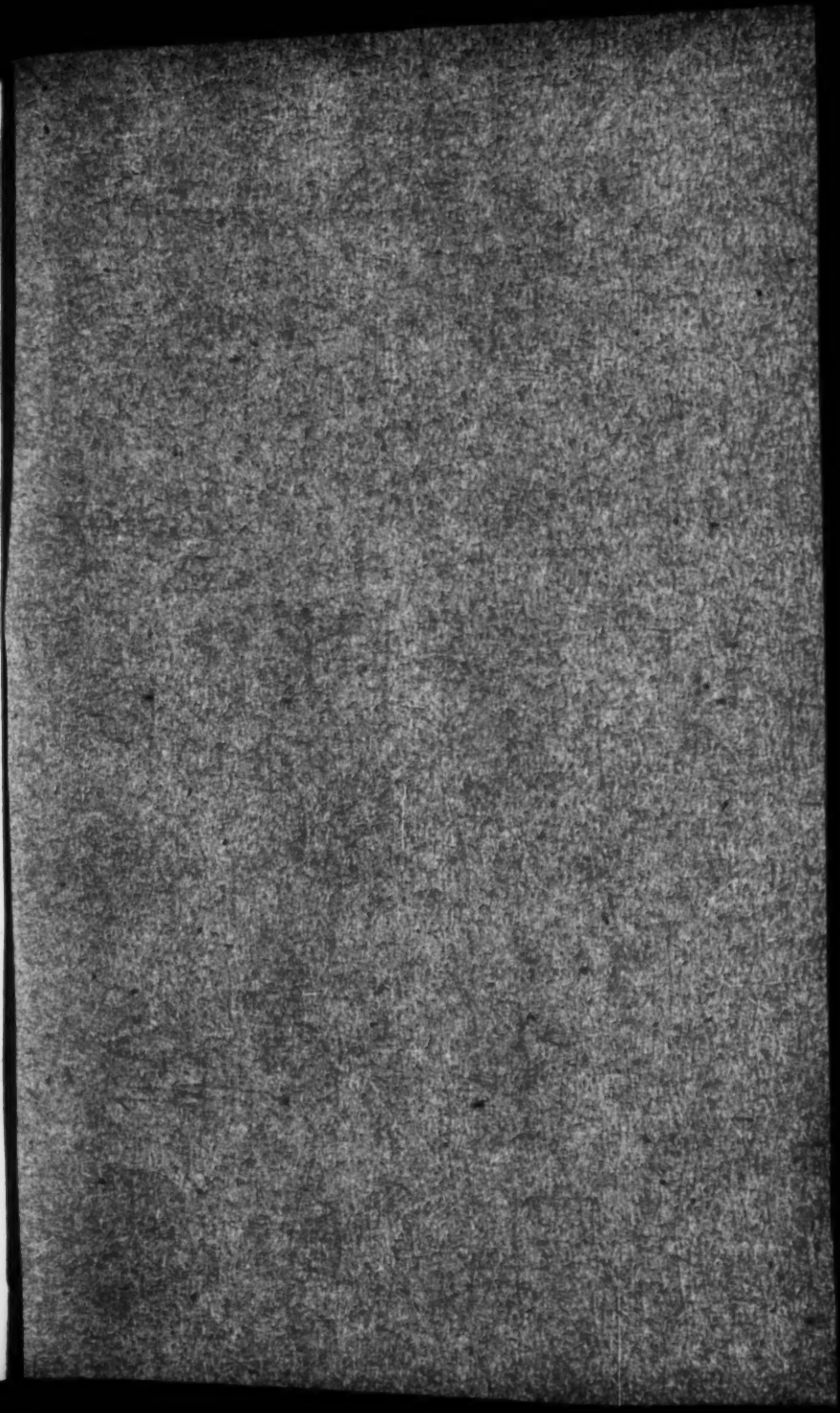
1. Jeſus Chriſt. *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promiſes made, he ſaith not unto ſeeds as of many, but as of one, and to thy Seed, which is Chriſt.*

2. Such

2. Such as are Chriſts being given to him by the Father, and are in due time all drawn to him, *If ye be Chriſts, then are ye Abrahams Seed, and heirs according to Promiſe.* This will take off the difficulty mentioned in the Plea about reconciling Gods Providence in caſting off your Seed, with his Promiſe, where he ſaith, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy Seed*; For God never caſts off any of that Seed which he hath given to his Son, *John* 6.37. *All that the Father giveth me ſhall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wiſe caſt out.* Ver. 39. *And this is the Fathers will which ſent me, that of all which he hath given me I ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhould raiſe it up again at the laſt day.* John 17.2. *As thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal life to as many as thou haſt given him.*

V. If we underſtand that Promiſe, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy Seed,* of *Abrahams*, and every godly mans natural Seed, and interpret the Promiſe conditionally, provided that thy Seed walk in the ſteps of thy Faith, *Rom.* 4. 12. and walk before me with perfect and upright hearts, as I required thee to do when I promiſed to make my Covenant between me and thee, *Gen.* 17. 1, 2. This alſo will reconcile Gods Providence with his Promiſe, and vindicate his faithfulneſs in condemning the Children of godly Parents who live and die in their ſins. For it is their unfaithfulneſs in not fulfilling the Conditions of the Promiſe, that was the cauſe of their condemnation. Had they followed their Parents Faith, and godly Converſations, God would have been their God as well as the God of their Parents, and have given them the ſame bleſſings he gave their Parents. *David* was a man in Covenant with God, 2 *Sam.* 23. 15. *Now theſe be the laſt words*

of

of David—he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, yet he did not expect his seed should be saved if they lived and died in their sins. No, he told his Son *Solomon* plainly before his death, that if he expected the blessings of the Covenant, he must seek and serve God with a perfect heart; but if he forsook God, though he were *David's* Son, God would cast him off for ever, 1 *Chron.* 28.29. *And thou Solomon, my Son, know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek him, he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him he will cast thee off for ever.*

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